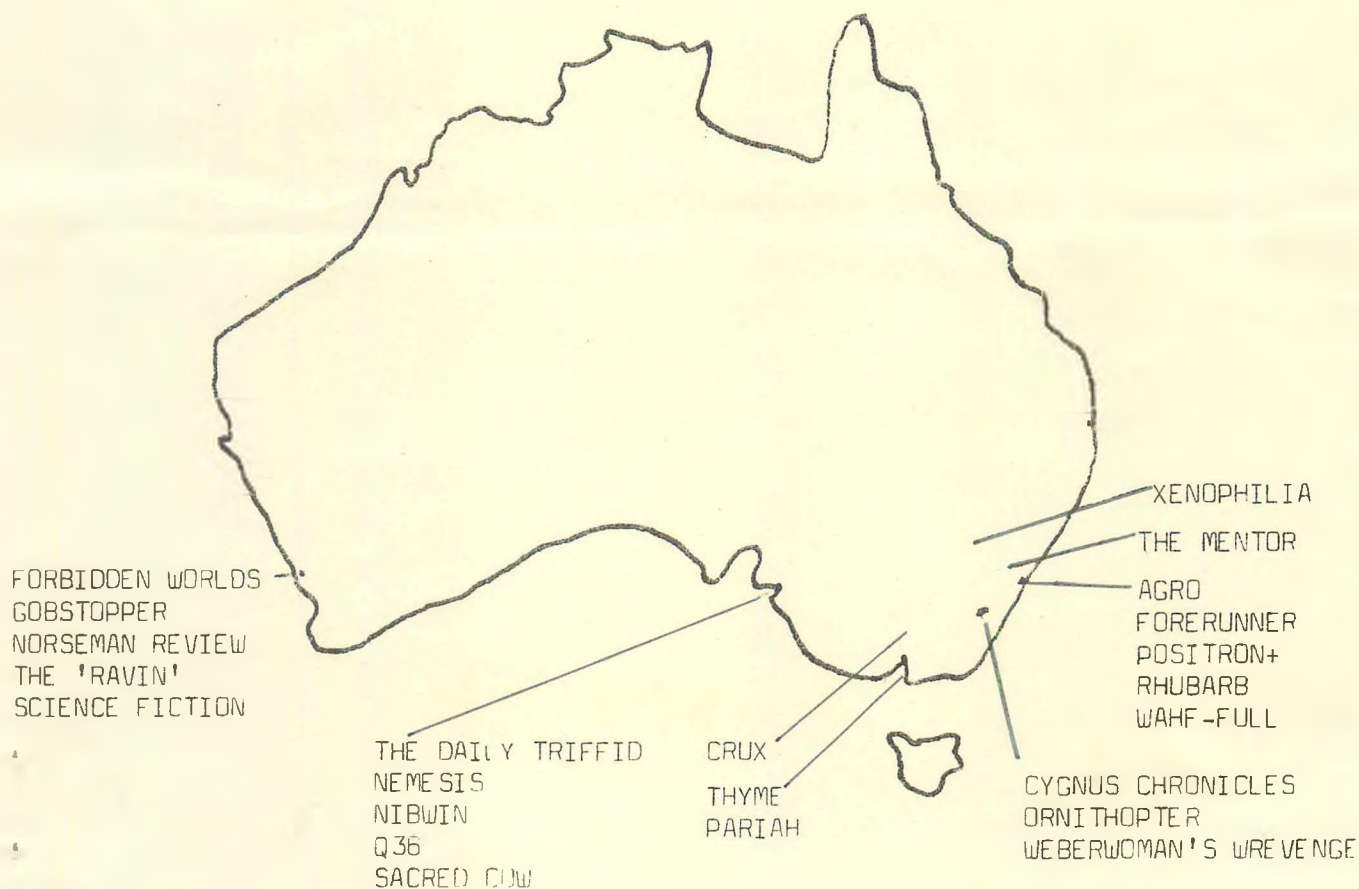


# THE MENTOR 42

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# THE MENTOR

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## C O N T E N T S

RON'S ROOST .....	Ron L Clarke .....	page 2
OF EARTHLY AND MARTIAN PHYSICS .....	Michael Hailstone .....	" 4
THE MESSAGE .....	Jason Cooper .....	" 10
THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIETY .....	John J Alderson .....	" 12
MEMORIAL TO US .....	Steve Sneyd .....	" 17
GRIMESISH GRUMBLINGS .....	A. Bertram Chandler .....	" 18
SPACED OUT .....	Mike McGann .....	" 21
THE R & R DEPT.....		" 23
ON MY SELECTION .....	Ron L Clarke .....	" 40

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RON'S

ROOST

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW

There were approximately 25 fanzine titles (other than media zines) published in Aust in 1982. To make things easier I'll go through them by the States they were published in.

From the ACT came three zines - ORNITHOPTER, WEBERWOMAN'S WREVENGE and CYGNUS CHRONICLER. ORNITHOPTER is a fannish zine put out by Leigh Edmonds, issues 9 to 11 of which appeared in 1982, and by the end of that year he announced he was going bi-monthly. Format is very aperish, with articles, comments, etc running from one to another. Because of Leigh's long time in fandom he has it down to a fine art.

The second zine, WEBERWOMAN'S WREVENGE, is by Jean Weber. Jean seems to have struck a rich lode with her feminist writings and writers, though whether she can carry on as pure only time will tell. Both the above zines are mimeo. CYGNUS CHRONICLER is offset and typeset. Jean put out issues 5 - 8 of WWW; Neville Angove put out the same number of issues of his offset zine (Nos 11 - 14). He is trying to make it professional and is offering money for articles and ~~fiction~~ fiction. And artwork, which is getting quite good.

Victoria's output of zines has fallen drastically. The most regular zine to come out of the Garden state is THYME. Irwin Hirsh and Andrew Brown put out issues 8 - 18 of this newszine, then Roger Weddall took over and published issues 19 - 21. The only fan-type zine in Australia, it is good in that it publishes con news and people moves. AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS, published by Merv Binns is offset on slick paper and carries more pro orientated news. James Styles published issue 4 of CRUX, a spirit produced genzine, with fiction which could do with some re-writing. Lastly Gerald Smith produced PARIAS 1 - 3, a genzine which is fairly run-of-the-mill.

South Australia managed to produce more zines than Victoria, this year. They include NEMESIS 3 & 4 from the Adelaide Uni, an offset zine beautifully produced and with some interesting articles. Another club zine is DAILY TRIFFID, of which I received issues 3 & 4. This is put out by the South Aust. SF Assn and is a medium interest zine with like reproduction via mimeo. NIBWIN 4 was received from Roman Orszanski, offset and looked good. Is a genzine with promise. Allan Bray sent SACRED COW, which is a fairly light-weight genzine, along the lines of the WA zines (issue 5 received this year). The last SA zine of note is the fannish Q36 series of Marc Ortlieb; well written and cleanly produced, but mostly on green paper, which tends not to give crisp repro, it is one of the more famed Aussie zines overseas.

Travelling further west, we find Western Australian fan continued their fanish output, with several of their zines falling by the wayside. Stephen Dedman's THE 'RAVIN' came out fairly regularly (Vol.4 followed Vol 3, and, for a zeroxed zine is mostly legible.) It follows the WA tradition of ultra fanish-ness (reminds me of the SSFF publications of the late 60's), as does R Mapson's FORBIDDEN WORLDS, one of the more esoteric of the bunch. Issues 7 and 8 (the last issues) being released in '82. The fiction is a little wild. NORSMAN REVIEW published issue 2, but nothing further has been heard from its editor, Mark Loney. Van Ikin continued to publish the very high brow SCIENCE FICTION, which is offset, with bound cover of bright yellow - very eye catching and has excellent reviews. Seth Lockwood decided to put out his own genzine and out came GOBSTOPPER 1 - which departs from the usual genzine in that it is mostly intelligible.

The last state is NSW. (No zines were received from Tasmania). As with the above, most of the zines come from the capital city, except this zine, and Richard Faulder's XENOPHILIA 4, which is a 'journal of sf biology' and is green with a stiff hide. It features 'straight' sf slanted articles and, of course, orientated towards biology. Those zines coming from Sydney include RHUBARB #2/1 & 2 from John and Diane Fox. This zine follows the apa style, with articles, letters and comments from the editors sprinkled liberally throughout. However, the 1½ spacing and the type in caps tend to give the zine a "squatish" look and detracts from what is being said. WAHF-FULL 8 - 10 were originated by Jack Herman and is a typical genzine, though with more media content than most. Well written throughout. issues 8 - 10.

AGRO is a pure fiction zine and the artwork is all by hand. For a new zine with no contact in its first few issues with general fandom, it is getting better. Issues 1 - 3 out this year, and contact is Peter Lempert. FORERUNNER is the long-running clubzine of the SSFF and the current editor, Shayne McCormack put out Vol 5 this year (I think it worked out bi-monthly). Articles, letters and club news make this a typical well produced clubzine. Gary Rawlings hasn't put out a POSITRON + since the beginning of 1982, when No.8 came out. It is mostly editor written and sometimes the duplication is scrappy - it would look better on both sides of the page, I think.

As I mentioned before, nearly all of the above zines were produced in the capital cities of the states involved. Those that weren't are XENOPHILIA (Yanco) and THE MENTOR (Faulconbridge) from NSW and CRUX (Ararat) from Victoria. Fans in Australia like huddling places.

Of the fan editors, two (Leigh Edmonds and myself) are publishers from the middle 60's, but the vast majority had their first issues published in 1982, or at most the year before. What 1983 will bring will probably be as before - a high turnover of fans and titles.



# OF EARTHLY AND MARTIAN PHYSICS

BY MICHAEL HAILSTONE

The last decade has seen a great upsurge of interest in the many kinds of doom confronting us. Among the threats of nuclear holocaust, global pollution, overpopulation, and being fried by ultraviolet radiation due to the destruction of the ozone layer, is that of climatic change, of one kind or other: desertification, the rapid onset of a new ice-age, and the "heat death" from the dreaded "greenhouse effect" due to the rising level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, the so-called "carbon dioxide crisis".

Of these three possible climatic dooms the third seems the most dangerous, for, while the first two would make only parts of the Earth uninhabitable, the last, it seems, could destroy all life on Earth, depending on just how much temperatures were to rise. Just how serious is this threat?

Since the industrial revolution began in earnest towards the end of the nineteenth century, mankind has been pouring ever-increasing amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, about half of this from the increasing burning of fossil fuels and half from the clearing of forests, with the result that the concentration of the gas has risen from 280 to 290 parts per million (ppm) volume in about 1890 to 315 ppm in 1958 and to 333 ppm by 1978. Many experts attribute the warming trend of the early twentieth century to this, and some have issued dire warnings that because of our ever increasing fossil fuel consumption while third-world nations like Brazil mercilessly clear vast areas of fragile rainforest, the carbon dioxide level will reach 380 to 390 ppm by the year 2000 and may double by the middle of next century. This could raise the overall mean temperature by  $2^{\circ}\text{C}$  or so and bring about changes in the weather pattern with disastrous effects on agriculture. The effect of this in Australia would be to cause Queensland's tropical cyclones to make their devastating visits as far south as Sydney, and to bring about more arid conditions to South Australia, Victoria and southern Western Australia, due to southward shift of the high-pressure belt across southern Australia.

This prospect is gloomy enough, but for many hard-bitten doomsayers it is far too conservative. A popular doom scenario back in the sixties was of a melting of the icecaps, thus raising the sea-level some 200 feet or more and drowning the world's coastal cities. In the seventies this was further developed into the truly ghastly prospect of the "runaway greenhouse effect", in which the build-up of carbon dioxide and heat would feed itself, causing the dissolved carbon dioxide to fizz out of the oceans just like soda-water, thus trapping more

heat and adding more water vapour to the atmosphere, with the end result of the Earth becoming a cauldron like Venus with temperatures above the boiling-point and the extinction of all life.

Why such an extreme apocalyptic prospect? Well, let's take a look at Venus, which used to be regarded as our sister planet, only slightly smaller than Earth but covered in clouds which hide the surface from view. Although Venus, because of her smaller distance from the Sun, receives about twice as much heat as Earth, the clouds reflect 80-85% of this, with the result that Venus absorbs hardly any more heat than the Earth. For this reason Venus was once thought to be only slightly warmer than Earth; as late as 1959 the mean surface temperature was believed to be only  $17^{\circ}\text{C}$ , as compared with Earth's  $14^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Science fiction writers revelled in an earthlike Venus of primeval swamps inhabited by dinosaurs, giant lizards and other such prehistoric monsters.

(Much has been made by Velikovsky's supporters of his prediction of a hot Venus in his book Worlds in Collision. However our own Ivan Southall deserves just as much credit for his Venus in his juvenile book Simon Black and the Spaceman, in which he gave the planet a surface temperature near boiling point.)

Mariner 2 changed all that. The 1962 fly-by revealed that Venus, far from being earthlike, was more like our traditional concept of Hell with surface temperature more than  $400^{\circ}\text{C}$ . We now know that the atmosphere is extremely thick with a surface pressure of some 90 atmospheres and consists of 97% carbon dioxide while the clouds are made up of sulphuric acid and other such unpleasant corrosive substances.

Scientists were absolutely staggered by that. True, Venus's atmosphere has some 300,000 times as much carbon dioxide as Earth's, so that one would expect a pretty fierce greenhouse effect, but not fierce enough, it seems, to explain the high temperature ( $455^{\circ}\text{C}$ ). Actually Earth has just as much carbon dioxide as Venus, but here it is bound up in the rocks and dissolved in the oceans. If, however, temperatures were raised towards Venusian levels, the gas would be released into the atmosphere, which would end up resembling Venus's (except that Venus is inexplicably bereft of water). The question that arises is: how did such hellish conditions come about in the first place? The "runaway greenhouse effect" has been postulated to answer this. The result is that, just as the discovery of quasars led to speculation about black holes, hence their present popularity, the discovery of the true conditions on Venus has led to the most horrifying doom-saying regarding the rising level of carbon dioxide in Earth's atmosphere, hence its present popularity.

What then does carbon dioxide actually do? Well, while it is transparent to the incoming shorter wavelength solar radiation, it absorbs some of the outgoing longer wave-length terrestrial radiation. The concentration in the Earth's atmosphere is equivalent to a layer of the gas at the surface 2.5 to 2.8 metres thick, more than enough to absorb all radiation between 4.0 and 4.8 microns, and enough to absorb about 40% of the radiation at wavelengths between 14 and 16 microns. In the absence of water vapour the carbon dioxide present in the atmosphere would absorb 15-20% of the total energy emitted from the Earth.

However, there is also a still more effective absorber of radiation on most of the same wavelengths, namely water vapour. Together they seem to absorb all the terrestrial radiation greater than 14 microns. So it seems that changes in the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere can affect wavelengths in the carbon dioxide band only about 4.2 microns and between about 12 and 14 microns, for



which wavelengths absorption by water vapour is incomplete. It is overwhelmingly the water vapour which is responsible for absorbing 85-90% of the terrestrial radiation, making the Earth about 40°C warmer than it would be with no greenhouse effect.

Now this is where all this doomsaying hooah about the "carbon dioxide crisis" begins to look a bit curious. We look at our sister planet Venus with her enormous cloak of carbon dioxide and hellish surface heat as a grim warning of what might happen to us. The would-be planetary engineers think that they can introduce algae or some such photosynthetic microorganisms into Venus's atmosphere to turn the carbon dioxide into oxygen and thus reduce the temperature to a bearable level to make human colonization possible. But, if such a thing is possible, why should we be so helpless here on Earth in face of the "runaway greenhouse effect" as a result of our merely doubling the piffling amount of the gas in our atmosphere?

The paradox seems even greater when we look at Earth's little brother, Mars. The red planet, apart from its smaller size - only half Earth's diameter and a mere tenth of the mass - is more like Earth than Venus or any other planet. It rotates on its axis every 24 hours 37 minutes, the axis is tilted to the orbit at almost the same angle as Earth's, thus the planet has seasons, just like Earth, also polar icecaps which wax and wane with the seasons. But Mars is entirely desert and has a miserably thin atmosphere, allowing great temperature extremes between day and night. Until 1965 the atmosphere was thought to consist mainly of nitrogen and to have a surface pressure of about 85 millibars; Mariner 4 revealed that the hitherto assumed nitrogen is not there, leaving a pitiful atmosphere made up 96% of carbon dioxide with a surface pressure of a mere seven millibars.

We have learned a fair amount about the climate and weather of Mars from the two Viking probes which landed on the planet in 1976. Both landed in the northern hemisphere during the summer there, and, although in widely different latitudes (22°N and 48°N), both reported almost identical temperatures over the first 50 or 60 days. (Because of the lack of oceans and cloud, temperatures are nearly uniform over almost the whole summer hemisphere on Mars). At Lander 1 the mean daily maximum temperature over this period was -31°C, and the minimum -86°C; for Lander 2 the figures were -32°C and -82°C. As you can see, that is a very cold summer by earthly standards, the mean temperature (-58°C) being close to that for winter at Earth's South Pole. The most striking aspect is the incredible cold maxima in contrast to those old figures of nice warm day temperatures near the equator after the bitterly cold nights. This is because those old figures were ground temperatures, whereas the Viking landers measured the air temperature. While ground temperatures in some spots may rise as high as 32°C during the day, air temperatures probably never come within cooee of 0°C, not even during the warmer southern summer when Mars is closer to the Sun.

The air on Mars near the ground is much colder than the ground itself. While the Viking landers measured mean air temperatures of -59° and -57°C, the corresponding mean ground temperatures (as measured by infrared radiation), were in the range from -55° to -48°C, with maxima between -13° and -9°C; the minima on the other hand were almost the same. Another source gives a mean infrared measurement for the whole planet of -43°C, which is a most striking contrast to the mean air temperature which seems to be close to -70°C., which is also the figure for the soil a short distance below the surface. Fred Whipple says in his book, Earth, Moon and Planets:

"Calculations based upon the solar radiation and albedo of Mars indicates



that its mean temperature should be around  $-65^{\circ}\text{F}$ . Radio emission (wavelength 0.3 to 21 centimeters) from Mars, measured by many observers, yields a mean temperature near  $-90^{\circ}\text{F}$ , which may be an indication of the average temperature a short distance below the surface of Mars. At least, the fair agreement between the radio measure and the calculated value suggests this conclusion. Even a fairly balmy temperature of  $70^{\circ}\text{F}$  at midday on an optimum location on Mars does not mean that the air should be comfortable there. Mintz calculates that the atmosphere a short distance above the ground might be colder by 80 degrees than the actual ground temperature because the atmosphere is such a good radiator and the greenhouse effect is small. The Mariner IV data gave an even lower temperature."

To summarize: Mars's calculated mean temperature is about  $-55^{\circ}\text{C}$ . We have three actual temperatures: the ground, which is  $-43^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and the surface air and subsoil temperatures, which are both near  $-70^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The higher ground temperature is questionable when compared with the Viking figures, but why are the other two temperatures so low? The low air temperature is explained as because the air "is such a good radiator and the greenhouse effect is small."

Now, just how on Mars can the greenhouse effect be small? True, the martian atmosphere is far too cold to hold much water vapour, so the greenhouse effect of this must be negligible. But, on the other hand, Mars has about sixty times as much carbon dioxide per unit area as Earth.

But there is a further problem. On Mars there are mighty channels, which, the scientists tell us, could have been carved out only by running water. This is evidence that Mars has in the past enjoyed a much warmer climate than the present, that the planet has had "water-ages", just as Earth has had ice-ages. However, it is very hard to understand how this could have happened. Earth's mean temperatures are near the freezing-point of water and do not need to change very much to bring about either an ice-age or an ice-free worldwide tropic, such as has prevailed for most of the Earth's history. Even during the last full glacial 18,000 years ago mean temperatures were only about  $10^{\circ}\text{C}$  lower than now. Mars on the other hand is well below freezing, and mean temperatures would need to rise at least  $40^{\circ}\text{C}$  before liquid water could exist on the surface near the equator at perihelion.

The carbon dioxide atmosphere is in equilibrium with the polar temperatures, so that the pressure varies seasonally with Mars's distance from the Sun. The pressure is determined by the temperature at the winter pole, and the temperature may drop no lower than this without some carbon dioxide freezing out of the atmosphere, this lower limit being about  $-125^{\circ}\text{C}$ . But changes in Mars's axial tilt, orbital eccentricity and precession of the equinoxes in relation to perihelion could raise the winter polar temperature, allowing more carbon dioxide and water vapour to build up in the atmosphere, producing a greater greenhouse effect, thus raising temperatures. This sounds highly feasible, though whether temperatures could be raised enough to produce liquid water is most doubtful. But is this at all possible? Well, strangely enough, the answer seems to be no. James Pollack in the September 1975 Scientific American says:

"Whatever the cause, an increase in the content of carbon dioxide in the Martian atmosphere will tend to force water to go through the liquid state instead of vaporising directly from the frozen state. On the other hand, an increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide may actually lower the temperature in the equatorial regions by diminishing the equator-to-pole temperature gradient. This would mitigate against the appearance of liquid water. Moreover, carbon dioxide by itself can do little more than it currently does to warm the Martian surface

by the "greenhouse effect", where the atmosphere absorbs some of the heat the surface is emitting and radiates it back to the surface..." (my emphasis).

Pollack, however, also states elsewhere that the carbon dioxide pressure would need to be 1 to 2 bars in order to have the greenhouse effect strong enough to raise temperatures high enough. Compare that with the present partial pressure of about six millibars on Mars, and only 0.3 mb on Earth.

But Pollack is not nearly as gloomy as Conway B. Leovy, who says in the July 1977 Scientific American: "The limitation on the amount of water vapour in the Martian atmosphere is the low temperature. Even an atmosphere approaching the density of the earth's composed chiefly of carbon dioxide and nitrogen could not have been much warmer than the present one, and so it could not have held much water vapor..." (my emphasis).

So there it is, brother. Doubling the piffling amount of carbon dioxide in the Earth's atmosphere will turn our planet into another Venus through the runaway greenhouse effect, but increasing the considerable amount of the gas in Mars's atmosphere a hundredfold or so will not raise temperatures much. Does that make sense to you? It certainly doesn't to me. So I wrote to the Jet Propulsion Laboratory raising this question, and received a reply from Conway Snyder, the Viking Project Scientist, who says in part:

"Your confusion about the effects of carbon dioxide in the atmospheres of Mars, Venus, and Earth is understandable, as the effects are quite complex.

"First of all, Mars is cold because it is a long distance away from the sun; it receives only half as much sunlight on the average as Earth. The greenhouse effect is indeed very small. The principal absorption band of carbon dioxide is centred at a wavelength of about 15 microns, and because Mars is cold most of the infrared radiation from its surface and lower atmosphere is at wavelengths shorter than this, so that the atmosphere is transparent to the outgoing radiation and would still be transparent if the atmosphere were greatly thicker than it is. Earth, being warmer, has a much larger fraction of its infrared radiation in the wavelengths of this absorption band, but there is an even more important factor. The absorption band is actually made up of a very larger number of narrow absorption lines. On Mars the radiation can (so to speak) sneak through between the lines. On Earth where the pressure of the atmosphere is 200 times higher, there is an interaction between the carbon dioxide molecules and the more abundant nitrogen and oxygen molecules that broadens the absorption lines and fills in the gaps between them. This effect makes Earth's atmosphere opaque to infrared radiation in the crucial wavelength region. On Venus, with a hundred times more pressure yet, the effect is even more extreme. I think these facts should clear up your confusion."

I'm sorry, but they don't; they only deepen it. Firstly, he says that Mars has a much smaller fraction of the emission wavelengths in the crucial absorption band around 15 microns. This, I'm afraid, just doesn't hold water. The wavelength of greatest intensity is easily calculated for a body of any given temperature, and vice versa. Now Mars's mean temperature as measured by infrared emission is apparently  $-43^{\circ}\text{C}$ , or 230K. By Wien's displacement law the maximum emission wavelength for Earth, taking the mean temperature as 288K, is 10 microns, that for Mars 12.5 microns. Not only is Mars's figure little different from Earth's, but it is closer to the crucial absorption band. In other words, Mars, not Earth, has a larger fraction of the infrared emission in this band!

Aha, but we're not done yet. Dr Snyder says that there is an even more

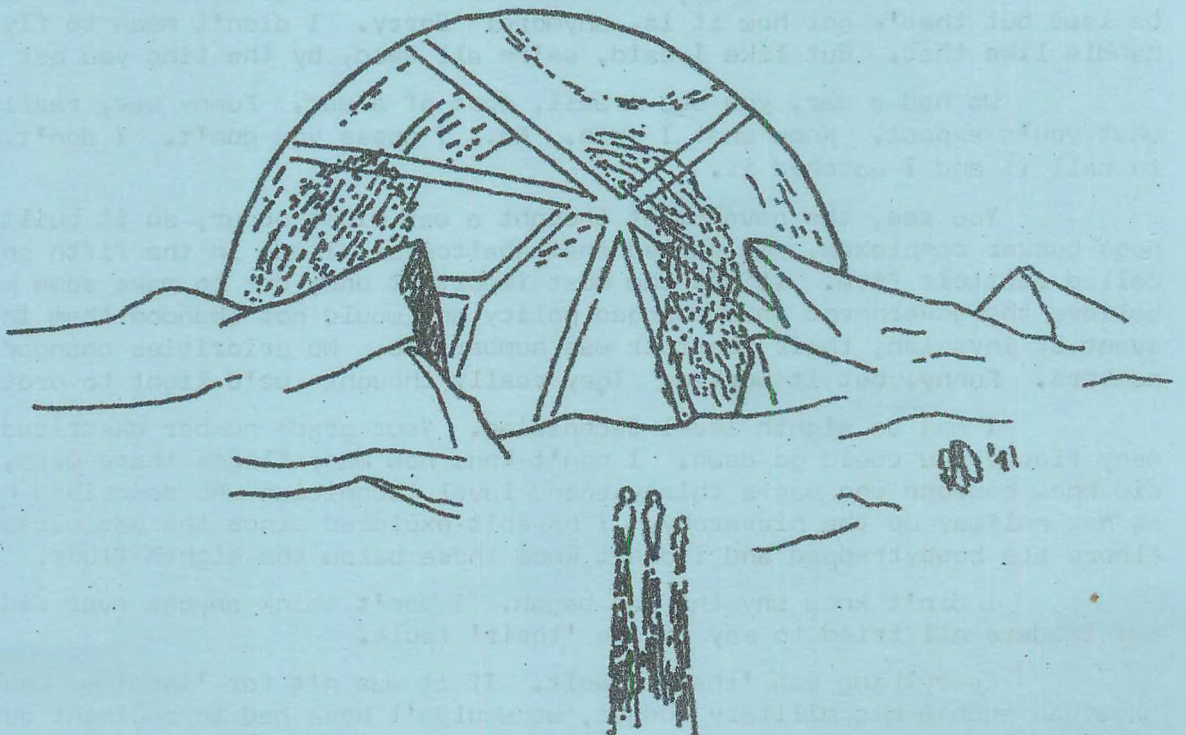


important factor: the much higher pressure of Earth's atmosphere, some 140 (not 200) times greater than Mars'. Okay, so this broadens the absorption lines; I won't argue with that. But suppose the martian atmosphere were much thicker, approaching the density of Earth's? By this argument, then the absorption lines would broaden and the atmosphere would then be just as opaque to the crucial wavelength band as Earth's would be in the absence of water vapour! Yet Dr Snyder and his colleagues say that this would not be so. Just what is going on?

I can see you readers of our practical bent wondering: does it matter? Who gives a damn about the temperature on Mars? Who cares whether it's -40 or -70°C? And what's the point of this rave anyway?

It is very important insofar as it relates to the threat of doom hanging over us from the "carbon dioxide crisis". While I am not in the least advocating complacency about the harm we're doing to the Earth, by the destruction of forests, effect on climate, and so forth, I also see a great danger in the tendency to wallow helplessly in doom. We are told by supposedly responsible authorities that our industrial activities will turn the Earth into a cauldron, yet I see nothing being done about this. The great industrial juggernaut, it seems, must relentlessly grind on; fossil fuel burning must increase out of all proportion to population growth, and the forests must be destroyed.

Doomsaying, of course, is not peculiar to our age; after all, the world was going to end in 1000, and everybody was going to be asphyxiated when the Earth passed through the tail of Halley's comet in 1910. But it seems to have taken on a new dimension over the last decade. Just remember; there is nothing like making the populace feel helpless and doomed to pave the way for an aspiring Big Brother to take absolute power.



# THE MESSAGE

Ummmm, hi. I don't know if you can understand me. There's supposed to be a codex device that helps translation. I don't know how it works, but even if I did it wouldn't help because I couldn't tell you how it works, could I?

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to waffle like that. I waffle a lot, lately. I say I'm sorry a lot, too. I don't know who I say it to, but I suppose it doesn't matter. Sorry.

I'd tell you my name, but without a context, with no form of history, what good would it be? I'd tell you the name of my own world but that would be just as meaningless. The codex, I have been told, tells you where we are. I suppose that's enough. I'm sorry.

I shouldn't say that so often.. we're all dead so there's no one to say it to. No more sorries, anywhere. Me and everyone else on this planet are dead. We killed ourselves, though I'm breaking the law to tell you this. I've always done my job, and did a good job, so it's hard to tell you this. You see, I work for the government, so I think that makes it partly my fault.

No! I used to work, and there used to be a government and there used to be laws but that's not how it is, anymore! Sorry. I didn't mean to fly off the handle like that. But like I said, we're all dead, by the time you get this.

We had a war, you see - well, sort of a war. Funny war, really, not what you'd expect. Know what I mean. No.. I guess you don't. I don't know what to call it and I watched it.

You see, the government thought a war might occur, so it built these huge bunker complexes. We called them abattoirs. I was in the fifth one, called abattoir five. It was the most important one, but to make some people believe the government had changed policy and would not abandon them in the event of invasion, their abattoir was number one. No priorities changed, just numbers. Funny, but it worked. They really thought we'd fight to protect them.

I was an eighth level technician. Your grade number described how many floors you could go down. I don't know how many floors there were, but I did know someone who was a thirtysecond level technician who described herself as not halfway up the hierarchy. I haven't explored since the war because the floors are boobytrapped and I don't know those below the eighth floor. Sorry.

I don't know why the war began. I don't think anyone ever did, though our leaders all tried to say it was 'their' fault.

Everything was 'their' fault. If it was n't for 'them' we wouldn't have had such a big military budget, we wouldn't have had to regiment our own



people, we wouldn't have had to keep secrets from people, we wouldn't have prepared to preserve the government and not the governed, we wouldn't have had crime in the street chickens would have laid more eggs, the weather would always be perfect, you wouldn't get hangnails... Sorry, It's just so hard for me, now, to look back on how things were, and then at how it might have been. If.

I remember the last day before the war. My wife and I were at the beach. It was one of those rare days when the sun warms without burning, and wraps you in swaddling laughter. It was a perfect day as we watched the waves of sea move to the land, and the waves of sand move to the sea. We remarked on the difference of pace, and if we could only be like the sand.

We didn't, couldn't slow down. The next day the siren went, and my wife and I, along with a million others, entered abattoir five. We all lived there, twentyfour hours a day. We would wait until it was safe and then come out again.

But it never got safe again. There was never a time when it could be safe. The question 'when' cropped up in every conversation until it was illegal to ask.

Then the violence started. People began to kill each other. Only individual cases at first, but as time went on, more died. Small killing gangs formed. Parties were made of killing, with people kidnapped and killed slowly for entertainment.

Then it got worse. Open warfare erupted in the bunker, and it really was an abattoir. My wife and I hid. I knew a place, part of the 'original' bunker. We hid there and on some days I'd forage for food. We were as happy as we could be, for the area had been sealed off save one small secret door, which I'd boobytrapped. It was wonderful. At least, it was wonderful compared to other people's circumstances.

Soon we were alone. Everything else had died. That's why I sent this message in one of the probe-droid rockets.

My wife died today. I wanted to tell someone. I just didn't know who.

T H E E N D

BY D. JASON COOPER

POSTSCRIPTUM: On a graffiti wall at the University of Western Australia, I saw the following: "My wife died today. I wanted to tell someone, I just didn't know who."

JOHN J. ALDERSON:

## THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIETY

### INTRODUCTION.

There is a measure of social reform going on, and more would be attempted if there were more consensus of just exactly what is wrong, and how those wrongs might be righted. Despite many efforts at reform, and disregarding the political propaganda associated therewith, there just hasn't been that much achieved. And this is understandable. Give a doctor a patient with a headache. Can that doctor cure that headache unless the cause of the pain is known? For the headache is usually only a symptom. So too, a social wrong is usually only a symptom of a deeper and more serious malady. Naturally, unless the nature of the body politic is known, there is little chance of effecting any lasting change. Despite all the wordage written or spoken about society, little seems to be realised of its true structure; indeed, only too often political bias attributed to society a certain structure which it does not possess, and then tries to reform that society on that basis. The result is normally failure.

It is bad enough that the real basis of society is unseen but in addition to this there is a whole smokescreen of mis-use of the word society. Society is often used when the real word used should be politics, industry, economy, family, class and so on. Added to this is a deliberate distortion of such words as "man" and "men" even when those words mean something like "hand", "work", "crew" or "body" and are in no way derived from "man" meaning a male of the species homo sapiens, a word, which for political reasons, certain elements are trying to phrase out.

There is also some confusion about the use of the word society. In some contexts it means a small community, and in others, a nation. But it would be wrong to use the word society to cover more than a nation, for by this time any pretext that the word means a band of humans with a common bond, has vanished. Thus the Scots and the English certainly form different societies, so do Americans and Australians. A society has many things in common. Its history, its law and legal system, its mythology, its folklore, its economic system, its family structures, its moral code and its ethics, its language and culture, its arts and its crafts, but above all, that deep abiding knowledge what it is one people. However such are the ways of the world that even such fundamental matters as the above are going to be confused. For example the English are a race with a foreign aristocracy (being Norman); the Aborigines are a people dispossessed in their own land and in Fiji two entirely different peoples occur the same land. Thus in England the practices of the "commoners" must not be confused with those of the aristocrats which are markedly different in those very essentials we shall be examining. The Aborigines, though with their society shattered and living under a foreign law have retained the essentials of their own society. The Indians



and the Fijians maintain two completely separate societies.

There are two ways to divide anything. The vertical and the horizontal. Think of mankind as a hamburger. Cut it vertically and we have two or more sections which are reasonably identical. Divide it horizontally and we can get all sorts of strange ingredients. Almost all social thinkers divide mankind horizontally. They get some very strange ingredients, for humanity is composed of some very strange creatures. And they label these by various names, fitting or otherwise, as such-and-such societies. Thus we have "modern society", "industrial society" and so on. And of course there are a great number of these horizontal divisions and every sociologist can add one or two new ones. Yet in this multiplicity of divisions there is little that helps us. The very criteria of division is a matter of whim. Some are economic, some are technological, some are cultural, some are this, and some are that. They may be valuable within restricted fields but their only value to us is in the way in which the vertical divisions of mankind moulds them.

The vertical divisions are natural. We are talking about societies, and as mankind has but two sexes, there can only be three vertical divisions. And they are:

1. The non-dominated society where neither sex dominates the community.
2. The woman-dominated society where the woman dominates the community.
3. The male-dominated society where the male dominates the community.

It is possible to further sub-divide the last two categories into those societies in which the dominated sex is held in honour, or despite. To try and so divide the first category would be a contradiction of terms. This is not to suggest that disputes do not and cannot arise between the sexes, for there are a number of myths and legends amongst the Aborigines of such "sex-wars".

It might be important to explain what is meant by a "dominated" society.

In a woman-dominated society the women do not go around giving the men orders as such. Rather the society is such that it is orientated around women and for women and its law and law-makers (usually men) work within a framework orientated to women. It is not a society where men are necessarily oppressed, castrated or drowned at birth. Fundamentally the woman dominated society is one where the woman's family is paramount in the community. On the other hand a male dominated society is onewhere the man's family is paramount in the community and the law and the culture is orientated around that fact.

The nuclear family as well as the extended family is an economic unit in every type of society. In the non-dominated society both sexes contribute equally to the maintainance of the family and normally do so in rigidly defined spheres of activity. For example, men hunt whilst the women gather food in the hunter/food gathering communities and there are usually strong taboos against one sex doing the work of the other. So to in fishing/crofter communities where the men fish and the women work the croft or small farm. In the women-dominated societies the women begin by owning the gardens and the men work in them and end up in communities where the women own the factories and the men work in them, and usually manage them. In other cases the men actually own the factories but still work for and on behalf of the women. In male-dominated societies the men begin by owning the cattle and doing the work entailed thereby. Even when women own the cattle (and this is frequent) the men still do the work. This is not to suggest in either case that the women do not work; in most communities

they do.

Once established the structure of a society is most tenacious. For example, Christianity swept through all of Europe and the Middle East and nowhere did it succeed (if indeed it ever tried) to change the structure of society. The Greeks remained as they were in Classical times and the Irish as in Patrick's day, whilst the Scots remain as undominated now as they were in Roman times. Even foreign occupation for centuries (again Greece under the Turks) does not change the structure of the society though its economy, its religion, its language and its culture may all change and die. Everything that holds a society into one cohesive community is permeated with its fundamental dominance. It is not impossible to change the structure of a society but it can only be done so with the total destruction of the society itself, and not only its economy but the very basis of its economy, with the total destruction of not only its law but its legal system. That this has happened in the past is true, but with every passing year the social system becomes more and more entrenched and its alteration requiring more and more destruction. Thus any social reformer may forget their intention of changing the structure of society; Christianity did not do and they certainly will not. However, what can be done is the reform of evils, and more frequently than not this will be brought about by the opposite methods to those generally used.

We are now ready to go on to discuss the various societies in greater detail.

CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE.

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IN REPLY TO JUDITH HANNA:

After reading Judith Hanna's letter in The Mentor 41, I reread my article The Historical Basis of Myth, and I can only confess surprise that a woman of her sagacity, after reading my carefully reasoned article, accuses me of "galloping off madly in all directions," rather than seeing the several types of myths I examined and the proofs submitted thereof. Let me recapitulate. Beginning with Ned Kelly I put forward a modern developing myth to illustrate the origin of "hero" myths. Starting with "Every people have a creation myth" I started with modern creation myths and proceeded into the past dealing with varying types of these creation myths. Finally I dealt with a universal myth, the fire-stealing myth. (The last few paragraphs dealt with some loose ends raised otherwise.) All the material from hither and yon was to support the case. Now I am being asked to supply evidence to support my evidence!

Now Hanna, or anyone else is quite entitled to object that what I refer to as the myths of Ned Kelly and the founding of Melbourne are not myths... but I would like their reasons, for it is my contention that, myth or history, they fall into the same category as those earlier myths such as that of Eden, and I am interested in the essential sameness of the stories, not the straw-splitting as to what they should be catalogued as. The myth put forward by the police was that Kelly was a common criminal with no redeeming features; the myth put forward by his supporters is that he was a modern Robin Hood forced into outlawry by oppression. Without these myths the Kelly story is unintelligible. Unless this mythification process is understood, then all demythification becomes unintelligible.



Right. I made the statement "I am very aware of the integrated nature of society." Perhaps I phrased that badly; what I was trying to say is that there is a basic similiarity within all human society (as well as, but naturally not as intimate as, in a small society). This is why I "boldly wrench myths" etc. from the social contexts as Hanna puts it. I am saying that these matters are as common to humanity as coming in out of the rain. Now Frazer, by his 9th volume, had changed his mind several times and said that his theory was not important but that his collection of information would be of lasting benefit. I whole-heartedly agree. What is evident from this vast collection of data is the fundamental alikeness of thought. Take an example... primitive peoples were apt to kill their king in times of drought or other disaster. Naturally we don't (though I don't speak for America, Lebanon or Uganda, etc.) but during the Great Depression of the 'thirties we turned out every government regardless of political colour, and during the present recession we are doing the same. In other words we are reacting exactly the same way... we now kill governments.

It is this methodology which I insist I share with Frazer. Like him my conclusions may be wrong due to bad logic or bad facts but I insist that the method used is correct.

I make absolutely no apology for my own interpretation of Brandt's works, just as I do that of Frazer. In accepting the historicity of the Djanggawul there are difficulties, but the same difficulty exists with every historical character and nobody ever dreams of disputing the historicity of 999 out of a 1000 of these. The cult exists, the cult places exist, and someone must have founded them and if the myth, the song cycle and the explanation of the myth say the Djanggawul founded them then I maintain we have our historical record. Now you may dismiss the myth



as the explanation of the song cycle, and the explanation of the myth as supporting tradition, but the song cycle is quite old and authentic. I cannot but maintain that the onus of proof at this stage is on the sceptic. The reliability of the song cycle as an historical source is a matter for historical method and scepticism before this point is mere prejudice.



I take the position that all myths are historical records and subject to historical method. Their historical value however varies from the very valuable to the worthless, in exactly the same way as any document.

In the beginning of my article I said I would be asking where the myth was and at the end of the article, I did. I still do. The demythification of myths is usually pretty simple, so much so that it often becomes a natural process. Eg. with the destruction of Aboriginal society the fire myths lost their trappings and degenerated immediately into legends. Take away from the Greek the god-head of Hera and co and you have a simple legend. As the fire stealing myth has no secret knowledge it was told around the hearth. The affording of divinity to Hera and so was a mere sop to the women (or an addition thereby) whose vanity might have been hurt as they lost the fight, and with that slight change in a more rationalistic age, Prometheus becomes the benefactor of everybody and not just the males! Is this sufficient difference between the telling of myth and the telling of history?

(I suspect that another way myths are created lies in the way a succeeding race relates the history of the people they conquered. The gods of the suppressed people become the demons of their conquerors, add their history become myths. That is, the marvellous is added.)

As for the purity with which a story can be handed down, I'll first quote de Blacam Gaelic Literature Surveyed, p.350: "In many a case, the literary version had the precedence. This may be seen from a collation of the Fenian story of the House of the Quicken Trees, as edited by Pearse from a MSS that is 300 years old, with the version copied by Mr Henry Morris in our own days from the dictation of a Donegal Shanachie. The correspondence is remarkable..." Now let me quote from W.B. Yeats, Irish Fairy and Folk Tales, p. IX: "... stories have been handed down with such accuracy, that the long tale of Diere was, in the earlier decades of this century, told almost word for word, as in the very ancient MSS in the Royal Dublin Society. In one case only it varied, and then the MSS. was obviously wrong - a passage had been forgotten by the copyist." (The story covers 54 printed pages in my copy, the missing passage in paragraph 50). The lengths the Irish Shanachies went to preserve accurate oral texts is well enough known, (in any case Yeats gives the details) and the Aborigines use a somewhat similar method. (For those unacquainted with Irish literature the above are not only two different stories but belong to two different cycles).

To rub salt into the wounds, Brooks Climate Through the Ages in dealing with his subject in historical times classes as one source, traditions, by which he means myths, and the background information drawn therefrom.

- John J Alderson.

-----oooOooo-----



# MEMORIAL TO US

for a cenotaph like a girl once  
in memory set changeless amberwise still as  
first met first lost

for Earth they don't display  
our pride our boasts no weapons  
scaloped as tournament

armour as ornate-bright childish-deadly  
no merely in their capital among  
blue quiet streets leading nowhere

where the Wellsource Quarter  
peters out in dwellings empty  
since the childlessness began

they remember us the way we were  
when they knew us  
our monument ingored but not

neglected even now when there are so few  
of them it is all they can do  
to keep essential services working

it is easy to recognise you cannot miss it  
it is a floral clock it does not work  
it does not break

has merely in overspill of blossom  
long since outgrown Time  
smiling as soft fools do

to hide their tears i told them  
this relic tells us  
nothing we wish to remember

about ourselves  
it does however tell us  
too much about you

---

Steve Sneyd

# GRIMESISH GRUMBLINGS -

## BETTER A BAD REVIEW THAN NONE ALL - PERHAPS.

### A BERTRAM CHANDLER

Now and again I am asked to do a book review. The Literary Editor of The Sydney Morning Herald is very good at farming out reviewing work to specialists in various fields. For example, Dr. Tony Vinson did a piece of the notorious Jack Abbott's In The Belly Of The Beast. Jack Abbott, you will recall, was the convict who became a protege of Norman Mailer, which famous writer used his influence to get him paroled and then persuaded his own agent, Scott Meredith, to handle Abbott's masterpiece. Abbott did not stay long out of prison as he blotted his copybook again with a rather nasty murder. Mr. Vinson, reviewing Abbott's book, was obliged to admit that Abbott was a criminal but, Dr. Vinson being Dr. Vinson, managed to convince himself (but not all of this readers) that the poor, dear boy never had a chance and that It Was All Society's Fault.

When we were last in New York Susan and I were entertained to dinner by the Scott Meredith Literary Agency. Unfortunately Scott was ill at the time but instructed Henry Dunow, who is my personal groom in the SMLA stable, to play host. During the mealtime conversation I played with an amusing idea. "Wouldn't it be fun," I said, "if Scott had a banquet for all the writers whom he represents? The late P.G. Wodehouse, Spiro Agnew, A. Bertram Chandler, Norman Mailer, Jack Abbott..."

Here Henry broke in.

"We dropped him!" he snapped indignantly.

So far I have had three book reviewing assignments from SMH. The first was one of those boring academic works about science fiction. It was hard work reading the book. It was even harder work writing about it. As I recall, I sort of damned it with faint praise. The next one was the excellent Passenger Liners Of Australia And New Zealand. That review wrote itself. The third one I had to turn down, as the Literary Editor wanted a review only if I could say something good about the book. It is a great pity that she made that stipulation.



I should thoroughly have enjoyed writing a real stinker. It was, I kid you not, no more (or less) than an exhumation of the better-left buried "Shaver Mystery". Secret subterranean kingdoms populated by superpersons, and all presented as fact, not fiction.

And now Ron has followed the example of SMH and sent me a book that he thinks that I am qualified to review. This is John Baxter's The Black Yacht. I did not find it at all hard to read. It could be classed as borderline SF. There are fairly frequent dollops of kinky sex - but who as I to be censorious? And Baxter seems to have done his homework regarding a subculture that is even weirder than any of the science fiction subcultures. (Science fiction itself I regard as a culture.) The subculture dealt with in The Black Yacht is The America's Cup subculture. (When The America's Cup first started, at about the turn of the century, it was no more - and no less! - than deepwater yachting, superb sail seamanship, as today's Sydney to Hobart race is. But now it has fallen into the hands of the very rich and, more and more, the yachts are becoming intricate electronic toys with computer-designed hulls and sail plans. When science, that sort of science, comes in at the door, art flies out of the window.) (I seem to have gotten mounted on one of my pet hobby horses. I was brought up in the good old days when it was said that both gunnery and navigation were arts rather than sciences. The modern passion for electronics has taken the fun out of both of them.)

But back to The Black Yacht. John Baxter has achieved the almost impossible. He has made an America's Cup race - once described as being almost as exciting as watching grass grow - exciting. In matters of seamanship and maritime general knowledge outside yachting technicalities there are one or two small errors but of a sort apparent only to a professional seaman.

And that is my review.

There was a review that I read recently, in The Sydney Morning Herald, that turned me green with envy. It was by Kingsley Amis of the second John Gardiner attempt at resurrecting James Bond. Some years ago Mr. Amis, writing under a nom de plume, did a resurrection job on the late Mr. Fleming's hero. This was Colonel Sun. It was a good novel, Amis rather than Fleming, but Bond was still the essential Bond. Amis - see his The James Bond Dossier - was a James Bond fan. He knew James Bond almost as well as Fleming did. The book was a labour of love. When I met Mr. Amis at Seacon in Brighton, England I asked him if he planned to do a Colonel Sun follow up. His answer was very noncommittal.

When we were in the U.S.A. for Chicon the first Gardiner version of James Bond, License Renewed, was among the paperbacks purchased for in flight reading. Neither Susan nor I thought much of it. We didn't bother to bring it back but left it in some hotel some place. Having read Mr. Amis on the second book we most certainly shall not bother to get it, even if at no expense from the library.

Nevertheless I am wondering why Mr. Gardiner was unable to bring James Bond back to life when Mr. Amis was so successful. After all, his own series character, Boysie Oakes - The Liquidator et seq although not quite in the same class as James Bond had a life of his own.

I think I have the answer. I could be wrong, but it makes sense to me, at least. Perhaps Mr. Gardiner was never a James Bond fan, as Mr. Amis most certainly was. Perhaps he was offered a large sum of money to do the exhumation. Perhaps he needed the money - and don't we all? - but his heart wasn't really in the job. But he ploughed on regardless and delivered the manuscript of the first

novel on time, and then the manuscript of the second novel on time. Will there be a third one? For many (printed word) James Bond fans like Susan and myself (and Mr. Amis) the first was one too many.

It ties in with my own experience.

Many years ago there was an SF(?) writer called John Russell Fearn, sometimes referred to as The Man With A Thousand Pseudonyms. He made a very nice living by mass producing crap. Among his creations - under his own name - was a horrid character - with even more horrid friends - called The Golden Amazon. Well, Mr. Fearn died. The readers of the Toronto Star Weekly, in which periodical the Golden Amazon series had been running for some time, were heart-broken and begged the Literary Editor to, somehow, keep the series running. Miss Cowling approached Scott Meredith. I don't know how many of the writers in Scott's stable were asked to do an exhumation job but I was one of them. Not being a Fearn fan I asked Don Tuck, in Hobart, for the lean of some old Amazings in which Golden Amazon stories had appeared. This version of the Golden Amazon was a sort of female Tarzan, reared by the things of the Venusian swamplands. I decided that I certainly couldn't do anything with her - and certainly not with the human family and friends that she had acquired over the years - and that the only way to do it involved tinkering with Time so that I could catch her young and bring her up properly. Miss Cowling received the manuscript and said, "But this isn't my Golden Amazon! She sent me some copies of the Toronto Star Weekly. From these I learned that Golden Amazon II was the result of a genetic experiment carried out by a Mad Scientist during World War II. She was immortal and, over the years, had acquired all sorts of impossible coppers - Venusians, Jovians, Saturnians; and The Odd Gods Of The Galaxy alone know what.

So I did a First Chapter and a Synopsis. In the first chapter I killed off all Violet Ray's (yes, that was her name) friends and in the synopsis made it clear that she was to be thoroughly brain-wiped and started again from scratch.

Miss Cowling said nastily, "I don't think that Mr. Chandler likes Mr. Fearn."

Perhaps if she'd offered me the same money as Mr. Gardiner's publishers offered him I might have persisted.

-- A Bertram Chandler.

THE BLACK YACHT by John Baxter. N.E.L. UK price £1.95. Dist in Aust. by Hodder & Stoughton. On sale now.

—oooOooo—











## The R. E. R. Dept.



Raymond L. Clancy  
494 Midland Ave.,  
Staten Island,  
New York 10306,  
U.S.A.

This business of history, myth, and legend makes me shake my head. Except in the case of people who changed names after a death to chase sorrow more quickly, oral history did not make mistakes, did not lie, or propagandize, poetic though it often was. One lost his tongue if one altered it. Concealment, lies, slanting, all came in with the written word. Then too, ignorance played its part. We know more of past times today than those did who lived them. Romans who wrote about elk and elephants without knees - some witnesses! Prehistoric hunters knew better.

As I understand myth, it is the effort by later generations to provide a reason for survivals of the past when they have forgotten the real reasons for them.

Buck Coulson's letter: I was under the impression that a great many of the English aristocracy were transported to Australia. (Because their land had been taken from them, and in desperation they had become highwaymen.)

[I don't think many at all of the real aristocracy were transported. What we got were criminals and political dissidents. Which is partly the reason why in the late nineteenth century and early 20th Australia had such forward looking laws and social benefits (voting for women at Federation, for one, - Ron]

Buck's knowledge of the country is refreshing after one hears city people talk about such things. Just the same, Buck should see the flashing knife blades of our "nicely reared children" here in New York City. These days I do appreciate plumbing, gas heat and electricity. So many lack these things though, fallen victims to corporate greed. Our homeless would be an army if they could be organized. One observes the phenomenon of the youth locking the bathroom against parents and siblings long enough to make them wish they had a privy.

Those backhouses were grim places in winter. Buck's right. Summer made them extra-terrestrial. That smelly atmosphere could not have been Terra's. Nor could such gigantic spiders, bees, wasps and hornets have been native to this planet. One could not wish to linger, but escape was often difficult. The aliens didn't want to be taken to your leader. They wanted you. Can't say I agree about the pesticides though. There are ways of insect control which do not poison the water level itself. Lamplight was kinder to the eyes than electric light, according to specialists whose opinions I have read. Buck's power stations are dropping acid rain on us which kills the fish in our lakes, the

trees in our forests, and the crops in our fields, not to mention what it is said to do to our Canadian neighbors.

Something or someone is producing our swarms of mentally and physically impaired children. I'll accept any scientific explanation, because I know it did not always exist, this hellish fact.

Peter Lempert  
c/- Agro,  
PO Box 310,  
Smithfield,  
NSW 2164

Speaking of the perfect zine why don't we take the evolution of The Mentor one step further - how about full colour illos? Yes, the cost may be an exclusion factor but just think about it! Having met Julie Vaux at Circulation 2, I can honestly say that her cat and elf people are really superb in colour. Imagine Kerrie's art in colour, not to

mention McGann's 'Spaced Out'.

[Colour work does not entail all that much extra expense with offset -- only the time consuming chore of cleaning down the machine after each colour. - Ron.]

Bugs was a delightful tale. I liked the way he made reference to The Fly, Houdini, Bugs Bunny, Charlie Chaplan, The Stars Like Dust... was written by... Asimov. It is interesting to note that Don specifically mentions pages 105 to 107. My curiosity told me to look it up. On page 107 I found mention of a radio being used to contact a ship. Since the radio stated had a narrow beam it was a hit and miss affair as to whether the other ship would be contacted. The operator is supposed to have a feel as to how much he missed the ship by. Interesting parallels to Higginson's device. I also speculate that the mentioned pages may have been Don's inspiration for Bugs. The title also had dual meaning, not only Bugs the alien but bugs in the machine.

I would like to comment on an earlier column by Captain Chandler in which he explained the hassles of trying to get a manuscript typed properly as well as having pro editors butchering his stories. It certainly explained confusing things which I have found in his books, most notably in The Rim Of Space where the hero is about to go through the airlock of a ship which has just landed and the very next thing he is leaving a hotel to meet some people. This novel was published by Sphere, so other readers may beware of the poor quality that may crop up in other Chandler novels. This also does not make the Captain look very good. For a book that cost \$4.50 I most certainly expect a complete story.

I must disagree with Mr Mapson on his comment that Diane Fox used too much detail with the various stones. Diane's use of the stones was one of subtle suggestion which was, once you get to the end of the story and you know what was in one of them, you can not help but wonder what lurks in the depths of the others.

If we are to have stories explained by authors what is the point of writing a story? My The Empty City may well need an explanation but for me to do so would be the biggest egoboo trip of all.

And now I am going to have my say on back rubs. My mundane job requires a lot of physical exertion and I find that a back rub is totally relaxing. Anyone who says a back rub is an insidious form of sex has just never had a back rub or is having something other than his, or her, back rubbed. (In fact, an exponent of this art lives in Faulconbridge.)

Circulation 2 was, in my opinion, on a level with Syncon. I managed not only to get to know a few people who I



met at Syncon; Bill Kendall, Tanya Forlani and Marilyn Pride not to mention Marea Ozanna; but I also met some new people among who where Jean Weber (she rejected a cartoon of mine for her zine on the grounds that she wouldn't be able to live it down! Still, it did make her and others who I showed it to laugh!), Julie Vaux, who, while demonstrating the art of using watercolours, told me some interesting ideas of hers as well as how to tell the difference between a cat person and an elf person. And there were other people as well.

---

Buck Coullon  
Route 3,  
Hartford City,  
IN 37348,  
U.S.A.

Until now, the sales tax in Indiana was so small that it really wasn't worth the hassle to go for exempt status on mimeo supplies. Especially since I do take YANDRO as an income tax deduction and write off purchases, tax and all, as necessary for my business. Now that the state is going to be some millions in debt by next July if taxes aren't raised - and the state constitution forbids the state to go in debt - presumably taxes will go up and a sales tax exemption might be more worth the effort. We shall see.

I'm not sure what would happen, incidentally, if the state did end up its fiscal year in debt. Someone suggested that the state police would roar up to the governor's mansion and haul him away on charges of illegal behaviour, but I somehow can't picture it really happening. (Delightful as it might be...)

I can't quite see Libe's comment that science fiction fails to appeal to diversified general readers as a fault. Because some science fiction has appealed to quite literally millions of people without being all that great... I mean, Six Million Dollar Man was No.1 in the tv ratings for years. It communicated with the average citizen, appealed to those without scientific backgrounds, etc. Libe will doubtless say that it's not what he's writing about - but nothing he writes excludes such material. If he restricts his comments to readers (which he didn't) then Edgar Rice Burroughs is the greatest science fiction writer who ever lived; he certainly appealed to more people.

I'm also not sure just what he's writing about when he says that the subject matter of stf is "too dry, rote, and boring" in one sentence, and has an "overstress of violence and depravity" in the next. Dry violence? Boring depravity? Possible, certainly, but hardly a major component of stf. (Yes, I know he's writing about different types of stf - but once he admits there are different types, which appeal to different people, then he's shot his own No.1 argument down in flames. Is he positive he knows what appeals to general readers? Especially considering the sales record of the Gor books?)

I'm not sure that Chandler is right about even an "average" person having the wit to check a firearm which he has been specifically told is ready for use. I'm sure Chandler himself would; probably most fans would, because we are less gullible than the average. But an awful lot of people believe implicitly in what they're told. (And an even bigger lot believe in obeying a superior's instructions to the letter, and not doing a single thing that hasn't been specified.)

Well, if Alderson believes that documented history is mostly lies, then documented anything that he hasn't personally vouched for is mostly lies, and Kells has as good a right to believe in Atlantis as Alderson has to believe in Ancient Greece. I doubt that Alderson has personally run tests to determine the age of any artefact; or at least of any outside of Australia. How does he



know that Velikovsky wasn't right? In fact, Alderson believes in the documents that he want st believe in - exactly as Kells does. (And why is he quoting Grinsell - what makes Grinsell any more truthful than anyone else?)

In fact, I doubt that Alderson believes in half of what he writes; he's being the ideal columnist and stirring up controversy.

I do believe that Kells believes in his idiotic pronouncements, however. "The less we know about the universe, the happier we will be". Well, yes; if we had refrained from learning, then half the population of thw world would be dead, and presumably "at peace". Kells, of course, would be dead in Ireland; since it took knowledge of the universe to discover Australia, he wouldn't be there. That might make him even happier. Jean Weber would definitely be happier, considering her comment in another fanzine. (Actually I'm simplifying; most of the population reduction caused by Kell's ideas wouldn't have been born in the first place and would simply be non-existent instead of dead. Without a knowledge of the universe, Earth simply won't support as many people as it does now.)



LONE  
HARPER

A  
HIGH  
ONE  
A  
WANDERER

James Styles  
Ward 7E, Bed 8  
Royal Melbourne  
Hospital.

Thank you for  
TM 41 which my mother  
passed on to me while  
I hung/hang in skin  
traction in the Royal  
Melbourne. Apparently I've been suffer-  
ing hip arthritis for many months and the  
physiotherapy and other exerciess I was  
advised to do have only aggravated the  
arthritis.

First, the fiction and poetry  
was ok. I found Ron's Roost quite  
interesting. I have registered Crux with  
Aust. Post and so must produce four  
issues during 1983. I will probably  
remain with spirit duplication until Crux  
8, but I am presently looking at superior  
means of reproduction, and am quite inter-  
ested in offset.

Presently I'm awaiting sales  
tax exemption for Crux Publications but  
doubt that I'll receive it, as my turnover  
as a "small manufactu er" would be too  
small.

I think Shayne McCormack's gesture was good. Next year I'll be very  
interested in people who'd like to do a Ditmar nomination block voting experiment



with me. The results might surprise everybody!

I would be very sorry to see media  
fen go their own way before the 1985 Worldcon - let's all get together and make  
the next few years in fandom something to remember! As to Mapson's pet corns -  
I still think that all Australians should have the privilege to apply for a  
national ID card which would include one's names, birthdate, recent photograph,  
fingerprints, and various licences on the back. Eventually such an ID could be  
issued 5 yearly like a passport and be used for all ID purposes.

One of the  
reason's given against a national form of identification is if a despotic form of  
coup ever happened in Australia, they would have an easy way of branding and  
following people who do not have their political aims. As it is, Australia is  
one of the few Western countries in the world with no national form of identif-  
ication. No Social Security numbers, or Medibank number. About the closest one  
gets to it is one's income tax ID number - and that is protected, with very  
limited government access. - Ron.]

Richard Faulder may suffer from being too logical,  
and in which case he has lost his intuition and human instincts, all of which  
must be drawn on for sensitivity and true feeling. Why the centauress has to  
be functional upsets me. The mammaries may be there for aesthetic purposes! I  
certainly found Kerrie Hanlon's illo attractive. As a "dessicated intellectual"  
Richard lacks true focus. As to "lactation" birth control, doesn't that leave  
women 200 years better off? More functional, more realistic, more natural, more  
heroic, more noble, more breast feeding, more sensitive, more useful and more  
feminine.

More barefoot, more pregnant, more chance of death.... - Ron.]

John J Alderson  
Vavelock,  
Vic 3465.

I hate to contradict you, Ron, about lactation ... "as  
long as the female is feeding the infant, she won't get  
pregnant", is just not right. It does vary with females,  
but I suspect it just makes it more difficult. Some cows  
won't get in calf whilst milking, most do. Pigs and sheep must be mated at  
exactly the right time, these times being known from much experiment and experience.  
This experimentation is unlikely to have been done with women but I would suggest  
to anybody involved in this, that regardless of the method of contraception  
involved, to find some other occupation on the 'two or three nights of the month  
when the women would otherwise be at her most fertile period. Incidentally,  
astrology is the best method I've heard about and general in Eastern Europe.

Actually, I got that information from a tv special on the female breast...  
which had lots of other interesting info in it - in Africa where the food companies  
are pushing bottle feeding the infants come down with diseases more than those  
breast fed. And when a species of monkey baby is sick with diarrhoea, the mother  
licks its anus, catches what the baby has, and her own system manufactures the  
anti-bodies which she passes to the infant through her own milk. Somehow I can't  
see 'civilized' human mothers doing that... - Ron.]

As far as the earth tipping  
over, I can assure Michael Hailstone that I am quite easy on the matter. But  
Wegener, The Origins Of Continents And Oceans, p.129, says "The North Pole at  
the onset of the Tertiary was situated near the Aleutians; from there it wandered  
towards Greenland, where it is to be found at the beginning of the Quaternary."  
In a footnote, "This position of the poles in the Lower Quaternary has recently

been re-affirmed in a striking manner by a number of biological facts adduced by von Ihering." The reference is to Die Geschichts des Atlantischen Ozeans, Jena, 1927. Jeffrey, in The Earth p.303, after asking if the inclination of the earth's axis in the plane of its orbit had varied, continues that the answer to this "question is a definite 'Yes!'" The theory of tidal friction... assumes the equator and the plane of the earth's and moon's orbits to coincide. The fact (is) that they do not..." Scores of scientists have suggested the tilting of the poles. Such a tilting would "shift" the polar areas, but if the tilting hinged on the South Pole the Antarctic would be scarcely effected.

"If solar variability caused the ice age," (says D. Menzel, Our Sun p.248,) "I would prefer to believe that increased warmth brought them on, whereas a diminution of heat caused them to stop." Tyndall, Heat Considered As A Mode Of Motion, p.191-2, calculates that for every pound of water turned to vapour and transported to the polar regions the quantity of heat required would raise five pounds of iron to melting point. The extent of that ice-cover, defined by Coleman Ice Ages Recent And Ancient, p.256. "When one considers the distribution of ice sheets in the Pleistocene, covering 4,000,000 square miles of North America and half as much of Europe..." it would require a fair bit of heat! But Tyndall continues (p.188-9)"We need a condenser so powerful that this vapour, instead of falling in liquid showers to the earth, shall be so far reduced in temperature as to descend as snow." If we just had heat the vapour would fall as rain. If we just had cold the seas would just freeze and we would get no glaciation. The snow protects the ground layer.

The latter is interesting as North-east Siberia ("the coldest spot on earth") shows no sign of glaciation. I trust you understand my scepticism about the ice ages and their mathematical impossibility. I cannot consider the present polar regions, though under ice and snow as being glaciated in the sense of the term as understood by the Ice Ages. As the mammoths of Siberia were so suddenly overcome by perma-frost that they still had lush temperate grasses in their mouths, the suggestion is that the shifting of the poles happened very suddenly. This would cause enormous tidal waves to sweep the earth and these, not glaciers, are the explanation of the so-called "glaciation". As for causes etc. I refer you to Velikovsky's Earth In Upheaval and Worlds In Collision and a number of authors who have written papers since those books dealing with interplanetary collisions, etc.

Richard J Faulder  
c/- Dept Agric.  
Yanco,  
NSW 2703.

You are no doubt correct in singing the praises of an offset printer. However, I can't afford one, and am reluctant to give myself into the hands of printers where I don't have ongoing control. Pity, really. You had been printing such good fanfic up til now. Unfortunately, Don

Fidge has much the same ability to write fiction as I do. He may improve, or a change of subject may help.

My mouth watered all the way through Captain Chandler's column.

Steve Sneyd's poetry was alright if you like that sort of thing, I guess. However, I couldn't help feeling that it would have been better if rendered into either prose on the one hand, or rhyming verse on the other. As it was, I suspect that one tended to lose the impact of the quite good imagery by having the flow of the language being broken by its being written as blank verse.

Mike



McGann's Spaced Out illo this time was interesting. Not so much for it's comedic impact, which was negligible, but for the discovery that Mike can draw pretty women. This was a pleasant change from his usual amazons who look as though they'd as soon blast you as look at you, and romance is out of the question.

Mapson has misunderstood me. Dostoyevsky, I would not disagree, is a classic. The point I was trying to make was that the people who keep alive the literary traditions that enable them to appreciate such literature are a minority. In democratic, non-elitist terms, the literature which should be considered classical is that which is popular with the majority of those able to read. For these people it seems not unreasonable to believe that they do indeed consider Dostoyevsky to be a Boring Old Fart. Enjoy Dostoyevsky by all means, but don't pretend that just because your group likes it it is great literature, and superior to Mills and Boon. On the other hand, I would not disagree with the assertion that what is needed to appreciate sf is "a competent explanation from the author". The appropriate background is not so much a matter of knowledge, although this is not unhelpful, since it is easier to launch oneself out into the unknown if one does so from a basis in reality, or at least familiarity. Rather, it is a way of looking at the universe as a puzzle to be solved, or as something to be related to, rather than something simply to exist in. Many of the classical authors do seem to simply consider the universe as something in which people simply exist - Albert Camus and Thomas Hardy are two names which spring immediately to mind.

Certainly the modern practice of horizontal childbearing makes the process much more disagreeable and fraught with risk. For my part I can't really see why there can't be a return to the squatting position. However, it strikes me that to say that the present practice is a result of pandering to the convenience of males is a bit paranoid. The People who are being pandered to are gynecologists, gender irrelevant. (I will be perfectly willing to change my stance if Raymond Clancy can show me proof that women gynecologists - and/or midwives, for that matter - insist that their patients give birth in a more comfortable position.) All this does not invalidate my original assertion that child-bearing is more dangerous for women than not-child bearing.

Peter Lempert, being "new to fandom", is obviously unfamiliar with the surrealist fanzines put out in the not-too-distant past by certain Western Australian faneds. (Fortunately they seem extinct, or at least dormant, for the moment.) It is to these I refer, for his work reminded me very much of the surreal, in-jokish meanderings to be found in those publications. It's not so much a matter of the concepts involved in the story, but how those concepts are expressed.

If I could spring to your defence, Ron, against Michael Hailstone.. One thing Ron is not likely to cut out of my LoCs is "unconventional usage" (by which I take it you mean "naughty words" - the use of which these days is, in any case, more conventional than unconventional usage). My writing does not contain such material, other than as clearly marked quotes on rare occasions, since I regard their use, aside from any gratuitous vulgarity, as being symptomatic of lacking sufficient command of language to adequately express oneself.

Me, a "right wing moralist"?!?! Those who know me a little better than James Styles would (I hope) agree that my credentials as a political middle-of-the-road and wishy-washy liberal middle-class intellectual are impeccable. I'm even a card-carrying member of what my Labor Party-supporting boss used to call "the trendy-muck party".. It is one of my sorrows that while I may want to pursue the "big dreams" and aspire to "new attitudes" the populace at



large seems not to want to do so, preferring to expend its resources looking after the excess human population. My mind recoils from the damage to the environment that would result from the raising of "less fortunate cultures and races" to the level of some elite. Not if you are talking about all the individuals who now make up said cultures and races. This is aside from the paternalism, the echoes of "carrying the white man's burden" of which Mr. Styles' words reek. So he is against artificial contraception, eh? Either he shows a touching faith that people will disobey King Lear's command to "let copulation thrive", or he views with equanimity the prospect of the world's wild places being reduced to worn-out agricultural land. You are correct, Ron, in saying that the best form of natural contraception in nature is lactation, and it's a pity that the pressures of conventional morality and commercial exploitation mitigate against

women being able to give their offspring the opportunity for demand breast-feeding. Unfortunately, this system will still result in a child about every 4 years, which is rather at odds with the need to yield only 1.4 children per individual in order to maintain Zero Population Growth, let alone the more desirable (for a while) Negative Population Growth.

I fail to see why "hardship should harden our intellect, strengthen our spirituality, increase our emotional tone and honesty and enhance our mental prowess". While being perfectly prepared to conceive that it may have some or all of these effects in some people, it does not automatically follow that they will be effected in all people. Indeed, I think I could make a case that as life becomes physically harder people become increasingly concerned with mere survival, and have less time for spiritual development.



APP Joe Hanna-Rivero A410871  
No.1 Tech App Course,  
RAAF School of Radio,  
RAAF Base Laverton,  
Vic 3027

Bugs by Don Fidge, I found to be a readable piece of fiction which reminds me of the old 1950's science fiction movies that pop up from time to time on late night television. The writing in this story was fluent and coherent and is in my opinion one of the better pieces of fiction I have

read in The Mentor. I particularly liked the concept of the hybrid orange. Perhaps one day such a device can be focused on a batch of different fanzines. Who knows, the hybrid result may well be the perfect fanzine you talk about in your editorial!

My mouth watered whilst reading Captain Chandler's report of the exquisite foods he consumed in the USA.



Once again first rate poetry from Steve Sneyd. Both of these poems exhibit visionary qualities, particularly so with the second piece which came across to me as a set of images rather than just words. Mr Sneyd is to be commended for his great work.

Reading through the R & R DEPT I came across Jack Herman's comment that a new category of rating films should be introduced (the suggestion he makes is "Adult Guidance Recommended"). I agree with this. Presently the Australian censorship and ratings system is inconsistent and does not do the film going public justice. We should take note of America's MPAA rating system. Their 'R' rating is not as strict as ours because teenagers and even children (under 17) may see these films if they are accompanied by their parents. So thus American children can see Quest For Fire with their parents whereaa Australian children cannot see it at all. The truly adult films in America (hard core porn, etc) are rated X which are for people over 21 only.

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Peter Kells                      Bugs by Don Fidge is extremely boring. The piece contains  
PO Box 1670,                      virtually no conflict, no dramatic interest. The style is  
Southport,                      straightforward, comprehensible, but pedestrian. This, however,  
Qld 4215                      is not necessarily a fatal defect; such a style cannot be  
   interesting in itself, but can be the vehicle of an exciting plot.  
There is nothing wrong with the catalogue device: many writers have used it to effect - but it becomes tedious and silly when the writer actually numbers the items listed, as Don did on page 7. But by far the most annoying thing in Bugs is the irrelevant name-dropping of cinema, tv, & sf titles. This gets on the reader's nerves.

Any story in which a machine is the "star" is bound to pall on most readers... readers born post 1945, say. The "Romance of the Machine" is dead - and has been since the 1930's. Machines alone can no longer interest us of the late 20th. They are too familiar and, therefore, can not excite wonder. In fact, many of us hold them in outright contempt.

As to the poetry of Steve Sneyd  
- I suggest that readers try the following experiment: first, write out his "stanzas" individually on little pieces of paper, then throw the pieces wildly into the air. Next, pick the papers up, arranging them in any order. Now, lastly, read the reconstituted poems. They will, I promise, make the same degree of sense as their original versions.

Faulder, yet again, has made threatening noises about "reducing the population". Curiously - and perhaps disturbingly - he seems unwilling to reveal whether he favours an active or passive culling program. Nor does he reveal which sections of humanity he regards as expendable... He makes the curious comment that insects are a "crippling burden" to our native eucalypts. Yet these trees have survived here for millions of years - despite this supposed handicap; it can't be all that crippling.

Richard is quite right in expressing fears for the natural environment should the "entire Australian population" flock to it. It is indeed plain that no ecosystem could long withstand any heavy influx of the rapacious "Ockerus Suburbicus". However, I believe that large numbers of people could safely return to "an idyllic rustic existence" - provided they had absolutely minimal designs upon their natural surroundings, ie such people would need to be the very philosophical antithesis of Ockerus Suburbicus. I contend that man can live quite successfully and comfortably, even with minimal environmental alteration. All we would need to do is sublimate our greed, material

ambition, and competitiveness. Let's hope it won't be too long before we realize that life can follow other paths beside that of environmental exploitation.

Faulder's use of the term "bio-engineering" is curious - for a scientific man. If we can supposedly observe in nature the evidence of this bio-engineering, doesn't that entail the existence of a "bio-engineer"? And who might that be? Is Richard Faulder some kind of latent religious fundamentalist? He still persists with his specious and spurious art criticisms. It seems to me that the Faulders of say, 1790, would have ridiculed drawings or reports of the platypus, doubtless pronouncing such a creature "improbable". But the platypus is a living creature; science can't deny it. One suspects though, that science only grudgingly admits the reality of the platypus. It is painful for science to have to admit that there exists a creature "different for the sake of being different".

As for James Styles' final comment - "Treat other people" etc - it is obviously designed merely to stir up controversy; surely no one could seriously hold such a vicious 19th C attitude nowadays - save perhaps for a few decrepit mummies lurking in the depths of the RSL, or the National Party. Styles' idea that "hardship hardens the intellect" etc is quite false. Man is degraded, not uplifted, by hardships. But what I find most repugnant is Styles' implication that a state of "hardship" should be artificially maintained for our own good. This is an evil, uncivilized, and dangerous concept. The present conservative governments of the western world will realize, too late, just how dangerous it is, for they are applying a policy of "artificial maintained hardship" in the economic sphere.

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Harry Andruschak  
PO Box 606,  
La Canada-Flintridge,  
Ca. 91011,  
U.S.A.

As everyone else will also be putting in their two cents worth, I guess I haven't much to say about your editorial on the small fannish cons. Here in the USA they are now a way of life. I myself was introduced to them at the very first AUTOCLAVE ONE, which was deliberately held over the 1976 Memorial Day Weekend.

The idea was that the big DISCLAVE in Washington DC would draw all the media fans, and those who went to cons for the cog shows and movies and so on.

As such, AUTOCLAVE ONE wound up with about 300 active fanzine fans and little else! It was easily the most enjoyable con I ever went to. WHY? Well, how many people can any one person get to know? You have your immediate family... but above 20 or 30 you have trouble keeping track of them, or even caring about them in a family way.

Above that you have your "Tribe"... Social Group, so to speak. About 200-300, which you will notice is the average size of the print run for most fannish fanzines. 300 does seem to be the top that you can socialize with a group. Above 300, it becomes harder and harder to know who is who, or even to care. As for meeting new fans, fine, let us do so. But where? At the last LOSCCC I had to stick to old friends and fanzine fans. I tried to talk to some of the newer attendees. All they could talk about was The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy. That is the latest fad. As I know little about it, we had no common ground. What else could we talk about? Space? The average young fan does not give a shit about it. They grew up with it as part of their daily lives, and regard it as a waste of money that could be spent on better social programs somehow.



Science fiction? The latest Lin Carter best smaller? Dr Who? Star Wars?  
What else??

So naturally we tend to return to the apas, and the small cons, and stick to known paths. Sure, we need bridges. Lots of them. But from where to where? And while the bridgebuilding is in progress, what are we to do in the meantime as we attend cons of a thousand or more attendees, and try to find something approaching intelligent life? Maybe Australia does not have the same problems as the US in this regard.

[Here a big con is about 500. The usual con runs from 200 to 300. Comes of having a small (15 million) population. So we still know nearly all the fen personally. And will for years to come. - Ron.]

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Roger Waddington  
4 Commercial St.,  
Norton, Malton, UK.

Well, if No.40 hadn't arrived in time, I was going to have to admit (anent the Chandler col in 39) that I too was a New Yorker addict, and one with a ~~new~~? three-yerr sub. Though without much hope of actually going there and seeing those scenes and places, I've each issue with as much pleasure as each issue of the science fiction magazines, and with the same Sense of Wonder, seeing both of them describe incredible places, amazing situations and ordinary people; in fact, that's probably the reason I have such a passion for American magazines altogether that they come from an exotic country, and yet are written in a language that I can read! Though if Walt Willis can go and read the New Yorker where it was all happening...

One of the trends I've been noticing in British fandom ( and indeed, outside as well) is to more and more cons, so that looking down a con calendar there never seems to be a weekend without one, and the increasing number that the Worldcon attracts; and I'm beginning to wonder if there might be a new breed of fan arising, one who will bypass the fanzine side, and spend his money and effort going from con to con... Though outside that (very) hypothetical situation, there's been much made in the fanzines here (you may have seen some of it) about the Project Starcast efforts - Cons put on by a professional (?) group to attract media fans, and the flak they've received for it, as if sf fen alone had the right to organise Cons and spread the word. Me, I'm one of those Jesuits who believe that the end justifies the means (or is it, the child is father to the man?) and if fandom can be increased by their efforts, they're to be applauded. Mind you, I'm still envious of those fen, that they're coming across sf for the very first time, while I'm trying vainly to recapture that feeling of wonder!

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Harry Warner, Jr.  
423 Summit Ave.,  
Hagerstown,  
Maryland 21740,  
U.S.A.

I shouldn't comment on your editorial in The Mentor 40, since I go to cons so rarely. But from what I hear in conversations and from what I read in fanzines, I doubt that the relaxacons are as exclusive as you intimate. I read reports about them which mention quite obscure fans and new fans. So, even if they're designed primarily for a specific group of fans, some other people must show up as friends of those for whom the cons were intended, and thus fresh blood is provided. The long existence of some of these relaxacons seems to prove that they aren't too cliquish; the Midwescon in the United States is older than many of the people who attend it, so obviously it hasn't attracted the same specific clique of fans from its inception some three decades ago.

Diane Fox's little

story reminded me somehow of the way some of the old A. Merritt novels got under way. The Ship of Ishtar comes to mind in particular, because it also featured near its start a miniature object which proved to have humans occupying it. But Diane probably doesn't realize that another memory is stirred by her story for some American readers of The Mentor. The agate figured prominently in the boyhood of various generations of United States residents, because it was a much-prized variety of the small spheres used when kids played the game called marbles. I doubt if marbles was ever popular among Australian kids and it seems to have lost favor in the United States gradually in the course of the past half-century. Marbles weren't made of marble and the agates weren't manufactured of that precious stone, but the word still has a special connotation to anyone who grew up before the television era in the United States. I seem to remember a reference to marbles in Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer, if that is popular in Australia.

/Marbles

were big all through the early part of this century in Australia and up to the early 60's. They were still going when I was a kid - tom bollers, tors and many others. They were made of some substance that, at that time, wasn't glass, but then glass took over, with those propellor-type things inside. - Ron.

I share John

Alderson's admiration for the cow. Unfortunately, the cow also has some limitations, like her willingness to be run to literal death if a mischievous dog is allowed to play with her as a cat will play with a mouse. In the United States, there is one rather common plant which cows can eat without harm during warm weather but which becomes a deadly poison if the cow eats it immediately after a hard frost. Cows give milk, it is true, but they also go dry without legislative establishment of prohibition laws, they fall into disgrace with the health department if their milk isn't pasteurized, their milk requires elaborate and expensive refrigeration equipment if it isn't to be consumed immediately on the spot, and they become terribly uncomfortable if their owner goes to a weekend con and isn't at hand to milk them at the usual time.

One note on the question of how movies lose their shock power as time passes, which Diane mentions: there's another reason for thinking the same thing will happen to the recent epidemic of movies featuring so much bright blood. The dyes which are utilized in present-day color films are quite vulnerable to fading or changing color with the passing of time. Many color movies filmed only 20 or 25 years ago look terrible when shown on television today because the prints have lost so much of their original color brilliance. Unless someone discovers a way to improve the stability of color movies, the blood won't look nearly as bad three decades in the future. (Paradoxically, some of the older color films look as good as ever today because they were created with a different process.)

Steve Sneyd  
4 Nowell Place,  
Almondbury,  
Huddersfield,  
W. Yorkshire,  
HD5 8PB, U.K.

... the erotic back-cover centauress conjures up interesting visions of the technoproblems of interspecies mating. Relaxacons also sound like a front for encounter groups of the third kind etc etc. Is a Murdoch press expose on the way?

Diane Fox's

story is a very evocative presentation of "the Ultimate Executive Toy" - a revenge mechanism, too, from the sound of it, 180 degrees or whatever away from the empathic Dickian Man in the Maze game which would otherwise have tangeness. In R&R interested in the bit re dynasties of skills (Julie Vaux's loc)... four generations sounds a bit low, though, when you think of societies where occupations, including arts ones, were either enforcedly hereditary



or prized heritable property. Wish I'd seen "Empty City" - the image of the 'hero' (?) sulking because nobody pays any attention to his machine gun, then consoles himself that it's envy really, is a nice one, makes me think of the Goths at Antium killing the senators because they persisted in discussing the sex of angels instead of paying attention to the conquerors.

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Diane Fox                      Don Fidge's Bugs was an entertaining little tale; there was  
PO Box 129,                      a remarkable plot "red herring" at the beginning, which suggested  
Lakemba,                      that the story would turn out to be another version of the idea  
NSW 2195.                      behind The Fly (ie parts of creatures being transposed to form  
   weird mutations.)

"Grimesish Grumberlings"- this is one of the reasons I look forward to getting The Mentor. The older stewards and stewardesses on the Honolulu flight sounds like a very good idea - they'd probably be a lot more experienced in coping with anything (large or small) that went wrong. The description of food had me drooling. I've seen the description of the "reverse Red Guard" manager-ess of the chinese restaurant elsewhere, but was amused to see it again. The bit about the hummingbird was interesting - I too had thought of them as tropical creatures - though had heard that they migrated (like swallows).

Steve Sneyd's two poems are excellent and the stories they told exceedingly unpleasant. The "nasty earthling" theme cops up in both of them - perhaps more intensely in the second one. The image of the perverse officer becoming fixated on the "cast-off" skin of the beautiful alien (and forcing his slave to wear it during sex) was an idea of gruesome fascination.

I'm forced to agree with Robert Mapson's criticism of my story - I was mostly imitating a new-wave style and it isn't really my true voice (though Ghod only knows what is!). Also strongly agree with his definition of classics. Agree with Raymond Clancy's comments on the unnatural birth position brainwashed onto women by modern medicine. In ancient times ( and in many Asian countries) women gave birth sitting on a special wooden stool. The force of gravity directly aided the mother's body, there was less pressure on her body and less on the baby's, and the birth was quicker and less painful.

Ron, my lousy writing made you mistake the word BORDERS for the word HORDES. So I seemed to be making a bloody stupid remark, which I hadn't. The image of a barbed wire fence around "HORDES" is one of a concentration camp, not of a "closed economy". A concentration camp is, by definition, a one-way open economy. Things (mainly victims) go in, nothing much leaves (except perhaps smoke, bars of gold, the occasional lampshade, etc). At any rate, this concept had no relevance whatsoever to my comments on open/closed economies.

About the only good thing about the sinking of the Titanic is that it might (hopefully) serve as a warning not to take seriously the experts' pronouncements on the safety of such things as atomic power plants. Unfortunately these people are too arrogant to learn from history: so we less powerful people should do our best to remember these matters. The words "National Socialise" have an unfortunate connotation - being used as the official title of the Nazi Party. Sorry James! His later comment on SPACED OUT troops (and Ron's about the WWI use of rum) reminds me of the endemic use of pot and even heroin during the Vietnam war. Apparently it was quite common to use the barrel of a rifle (suitably disarmed) as a pipe for smoking pot!

Re R-Certificate films, I saw Conan The Barbarian recently. (A very silly and pompous film,

incidentally, with the characters constantly posing in tableaux of ritualized violence). Lots of little kids were in the audience. They howled throughout and I don't blame them. Sex scenes and some violence probably would have no harmful effect on youngsters whatever but this sort of thing they can understand and it upsets them.

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Jack R Herman  
Box 272,  
Wentworth Bldg.,  
Sydney University,  
NSW 2000

Bert's gutsiness has whetted my appetite. I find that experiments with native foods are a few of the best reasons for travelling overseas. New Orleans is a definite place to stop on any planned US itinerary I work out, and Bert's food analysis of it confirms it from another angle.

My zine's name is WAHF-FULL, damn it. If you're not misspelling it, you're omitting part of the name.

[Sorry, but when I say it in my mind, I hear either WAHF or WAFFLE. - Ron.]

I really believe that Shayne is getting upset about trifles. However, I am concerned with one thing: her implication that the sort of rort that was attempted last year with DATA is a form of "(poking) fun at the Temples and Idols of Fandom". I have no objection to media zines getting on the ballot for the Australian SF Achievement Awards, I do object, however, to the method that has now been used to try to get YGGDRASSIL (unsuccessfully) and DATA (unsuccessfully) on to the ballot. It is not a form of poking fun, it is cheating. If Awards are to have any meaning (and that is a separate question) then they must be conducted in as fair a way as possible.

[I agree. However, the way DATA was nominated is how any zine gets on to the ballot. I happen to know that as far back as 1970 what you give an example of ballot stuffing occurred. Not so much as to get the zine on the ballot, but to get the votes in for the ultimate voting. Anyway, before the Con the editor of DATA had no idea it was being nominated, and until the person who told us in the first place about those DATA votes we did not know that anyone had nominated DATA. If an effort from DATA's membership had been taken up to nominate it - it would have swept in, as most of DATA's readership would probably have voted for it. - Ron.]

Now to Alderson and the perversion of History. Not content with perverting the subject matter, Alderson is back to his favourite trick: redefining the subject matter. History, he says, is about all of the story of man's sojourn on Earth, presumably from the time the first primate erected himself, although he does admit to a period of 'prehistory' "much anterior" to the written record. But what does his own quote say, history deals with "human sayings, thoughts, deeds and sufferings" which have left "present deposit". Now we can speculate about non-written sources but very few of them provide any of those things referred to here. Bones and ruined structures tell us very little, above the obvious, of the "sayings, thoughts, deeds and sufferings" of their owners. As my trusty dictionary says: History: "the record of past events, esp in connection with the human race; a continuous, systematic written narrative, in order of time, of past events as relating to a particular people, country, period, person etc."

But let's get back to the substantive ground of the argument. Alderson wants to suggest that the aggregation of orally transmitted mythologies is an acceptable evidence of historic events, or, at least, that one with his knowledge can find the event that is the basis for the myth. That isn't history or any other systematic method of study: it's wishful thinking and self-delusion.



Buck Coulson  
Route 3,  
Hartford City,  
IN 437348,  
U.S.A.

Interestingly, I'm not sure if I agree with your editorial or not. I tend to prefer medium-sized cons to the very small ingroup ones, but that's largely because the fans I ~~prefer~~ have never been the u tra-fannish ones. I wouldn't object to a con composed entirely of fans I already know and like, certainly - but it's not likely to happen. And I certainly agree with the idea of bringing in new blood to replace gafiation and death. (In this country, at least, the older fans are getting to an age where mortality rates become a factor.) I'm personally satisfied with finding one or two new friends per year, but then I've never wanted a large number of friends; and conventions have definitely replaced fanzines as the place to become acquainted with new people. Basically, I suppose if most fans want to hide in their own little puddles, it's all right with me - but I won't get in there and hide with them.

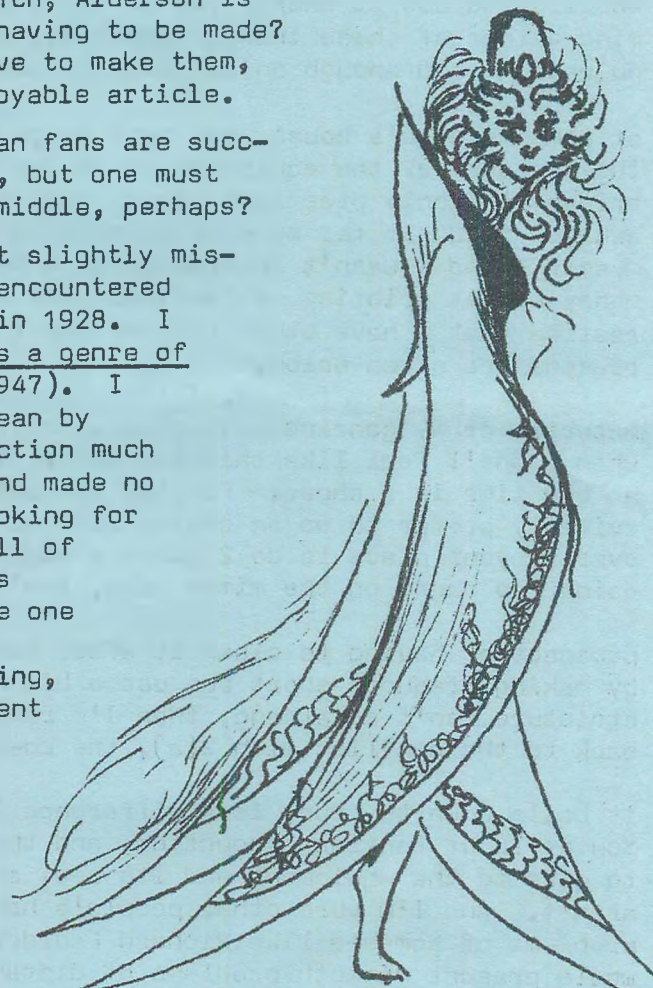
Tch; Alderson is implying that mines just exist, without having to be made? (Yes, I know he meant that he didn't have to make them, but that's not what he wrote.) Very enjoyable article.

Good for Chandler; even some veteran fans are succumbing to the use of "sci fi" these days, but one must draw the line somewhere... down Forry's middle, perhaps?

Faulder makes a good point, but slightly misleading. I'm not positive when I first encountered science fiction, either, and I was born in 1928. I first encountered it and recognised it as a genre of fiction at a very specific date (Feb. 1947). I think the latter is what a lot of fans mean by "encountereng" stf. I'd read science fiction much earlier, but I had no idea that it was and made no attempt to follow up the encounter by looking for more of the same. I don't even recall all of the earleir stories; I recall Heinlein's "Green Hills of Earth" because that's the one that started me looking for more of the stuff, and led to fandom. (And pro writing, and reviewing, and marriage, and my current life.)

Oh yes, Kells is perfectly right that the balance of nature will reassert itself, given time and lack of tampering. I note that he makes no suggestion as to what the excess 50% of the world's population do with itself in his natural world. Commit hari-kari as befits the minions of evil technology, I suppose. (By the way, does he type his letters, or handwrite them with a pencil? If the latter, he's only guilty of using postal technology, I suppose. Typewriters are products of evil, however, and I hope he has the purity to eschew them.)

I'm glad that Diane Fox agrees with me that a pros.'s intelligence or lack of it is irrelevant. That wasn't what she was implying in her original letter, as I recall.





Jean Weber  
c/- CSIRO,  
Box 333,  
Wentworth Bldg.,  
Uni of Sydney,  
NSW 2006

Tsk, tsk, your prejudices about offset printing are showing again in The Mentor 41, Ron. You refer to the "die hard" mimeo users as "dinosaurs", but let me suggest some reasons why one might prefer mimeo.

1. One has a working mimeo at home and prefers not to be faced with the capital expense of purchasing even a share in an offset machine.

2.

If the offset machine is bought on a Shared basis, either it lives at your house or at someone else's or (shudder, after yeastrday's experience helping you retrieve your machine from Katoomba) it shifts about from one household to another.

a) If it lives at your house, either you are occasionally/often visited by the other owners who wish to use it and/or you do their printing for them. Now, you Ron may not mind either of these things happening, but I and many others might find it a nuisance - and enough so to make the whole proposition not worth it.

b) If it lives at someone else's house, you have to go over there to do your printing, or have the "keeper" of the equipment do it for you. In my case, until I moved to Faulconbridge, the only practical way to have material printed on your machine was to ask you to do it for me - or spend a weekend afternoon at your place, printing it myself - and I wasn't interested in a 4-hour drive each way just to save some money offset printing a fanzine! Now that distance is no longer a problem, I realise that I have other reasons why I prefer to use the mimeo still. These reasons are given below.

3. I like to print a few pages a day, either of apazine material or my genzine. This suits me, it's relaxing, and a useful thing to do when I dno't feel like thinking much. To me, running off an entire long fanzine at one time is a chore. Fanzine production should be enjoyable, not a chore. You evidently prefer to do an entire zine at one time. C'est la difference. So driving over to your place to do 2 pages a night would be a nuisance for both of us, but doing two pages on the mimeo here, isn't.

4. Even if I had a resident offset, the prospect of having to clean it after each use would negate the advantages of (3), by making frequent short run use a big nuisance. If it turns out that this stricture isn't so strong, then I'd re-evaluate the situation. But then we'd be back to the conflict with 2(a), the co-owners visiting to do their zines.

So what it boils down to, Ron, is a difference in style (even if costs are not a factor). Your style of fanzine production, and the time and space you're evidently willing to give to the equipment and its use, are suited to offset. My style and habits aren't. And I'm sure other people's habits may not be either (Not to mention the problems of someone like Richard Faulder, for whom sharing a piece of equipment would present mammoth problems of distance.)

And let's not forget the quality factor - we all know that well-done mimeo work is superior to poorly-done offset work. And few faneds appear willing to put in the effort you put into appearance (I'll amend that - few non-media faneds). But a debate on production vs content would be an entire other letter, or article, wouldn't it? I'm sure your views on that topic would be different from mine.

Turning now to the rest of the zine, I liked the first page of Don Fidge's story, but not the rest. As a little anecdote, the first page stood up fairly well, but the expanded version was too wordy for the material, for my taste. Bert Chandler's Grumblings were enjoyable as always, with



with the unfortunante side effect of sending me to the fridge for a snack. And the lettercol was very good this time.

I must point out to you that lactation does not prevent a woman from getting pregnant. Lactation does reduce the probability of ovulation, but there are many well-documented cases of lactating women ovulating and becoming pregnant. I think I recall reading (though I could be wrong about this) that those societies where lengthy breast-feeding (up to 4 years) is correlated with non-pregnancy amongst lactating women, there is also a tradition of no sexual intercourse, or very reduced incidence of intercourse, during the lactation period. The latter situation, if true, would be more likely to prevent conception than the lactation. Or there might be other factors, such as foods traditionally eaten by lactating women, which might have a contraceptive effect. At any rate, regardless of that, my first two sentences in this paragraph stand.

James Styles should also be informed that pregnancy is far more hazardous, statistically, to a woman's health, than any form of "artificial" contraception - though of course many individual women have bad side effects from The Pill. But a condom, for example, while "artificial", has no harmful side-effects (unless, of course, one or both parties were allergic to the rubber used!) and in fact has a beneficial one of reducing the chance of spreading venereal disease. James' remarks about hardship being good for us came along while I was reading Doris Lessing's Sirian Experiments, in which she goes on at great length about the debilitating effect of removing hardship from vast peopulations. She also addresses the idea that for many people, replacing boring, repetitious drudgery with machines, "freeing" prople for other things, instead leaves them not knowing what to do with themselves. Hardly a new idea, but her treatment is quite fascinating to read. She is looking at general populations, rather than specific individuals.

I would like Michael Hailstone to clarify his statement "One is not allowed to live on a farm if one does not own a car... others won't let you live there". How do "others" prevent him (or anyone) living on a farm? Is there a state law, or council rule, or something about this? I am most intrigued! Details, please.

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WAHF: Kim Huett and Swancon 8, which is being held this weekend, January 28-31. I hope it went well.

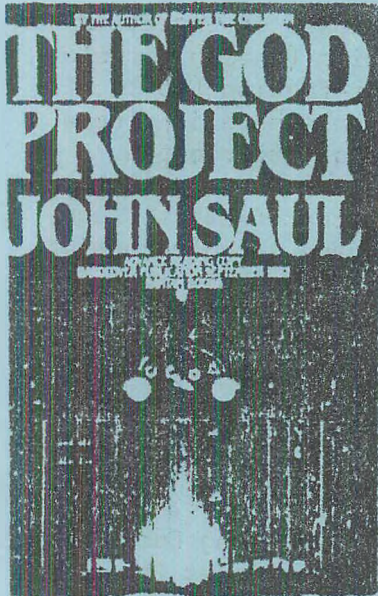
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There is an interesting situation happening in Tasmania at the present time, which is quite a turn-around for environmentalists. Seems there is a river called the Franklin which the State government wants to dam to construct a hydro-electric power station. The environmentalists want the river as it is : a 'wild water' river. The government wants the river dammed for electricity. The media is mostly the enviromentalists way. The funny thing, of course, is that the Federal government offered the State \$500 million to construct a coal powered electricity generating station. So far the State has knocked it back.

If they accept it, what the environmentalists will have done, of course, is rejected a 'clean' hydro-power station, for a dirty coal generating plant, with all its polution,etc.



# BY MY SELECTION - S.F. BOOK RELEASES



THE GOD PROJECT by John Saul. Bantam Books. HC. dist in Aust by Doubleday Aust P/L. 311 pp. A\$16.95. On sale now.

This is a mainstream novel which attempts to travel the sf road to fame. Whether it succeeds will depend on many factors. It concerns the effect on two families who have unusual children. Sally and Steve Montgomery had a nuclear family - until their baby girl died of SIDS. Then they began to notice something about their son.. Unfortunately her husband, Steve, seemed unable to cope with events. Then Sally met up with the mother of her son's mate, Lucy Corliss. Then the Corliss's son, Randy, was kidnapped...

'It builds up to an acceptable climax, which one can see coming some time earlier - I kept reading to see if it would have a "happy" ending.

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CONDITIONALLY HUMAN And Other Stories by Walter M. Miller, Jr. Corgi SF, dist in Aust by Transworld. 228 pp. A\$3.50. On sale now.

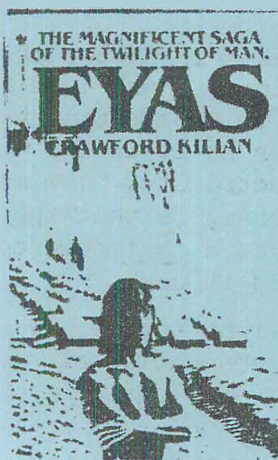
This is a first release for this volume in the UK. Miller did most of his writing in the 1950's - where these stories were first published. The copyright date is 1952, except for one, which is 1951.

The stories haven't aged - which is more than can be said for other sf of this vintage. The lead story is Conditionally Human, about the genetically altered animals used as pets for an overpopulated earth of the not-so-distant future. Possibly the most memorable story is the sixteen-page Anybody Else Like Me, which is about the meeting of two members of the next step in evolution, which doesn't quite come off as in other stories of that situation.... \*Recommended\*.

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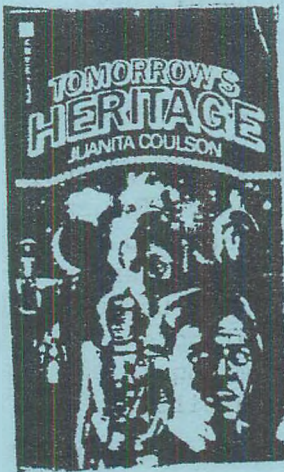


EYAS by Crawford Kilian. A Bantam Book, dist in Aust by Transworld. 354 pp. A\$3.50. On sale now.

This 'epic sag' is really that. It tells of the adventures of Eyas Fisher as he fights his way in his quest to avenge his People. Set nine million years in the future, its background is a rustic earth peopled with humans, walking trees, flying men, centaurs and other beings from other lands. Eyas sets out on his quest - to destroy his enemies - the Suns and the Deltas. He was born a Sun. and his boyhood playmate became his enemy, whom he vows to destroy.

\* Recommended\*



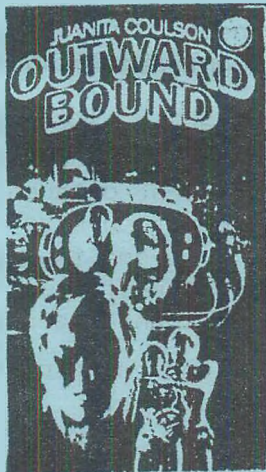


TOMORROW'S HERITAGE by Juanita Coulson. Del Rey SF, dist in Aust by Doubleday Aust. P/L. 372 pp. A\$4.95. On sale now.

This book has been on the stands for some time. It is reviewed here because it is the second in the Children Of The Stars trilogy.

Dalas has much to pay for. It started the 'family' sagas, and the wave has eventually reached the sf scene. TOMORROW'S HERITAGE starts the saga with some of the storyline already passed - the founder of the dynasty, Ward Saunder, is dead, killed in a fatal air crash. His children are the main characters in the continuing drama, setting up the background for the others in the series. The sf is 'hard' sf - all the background is mentioned meticulously and filled in with a fine brush. The plot is convoluted and attention must be paid at all times. Good, solid sf.

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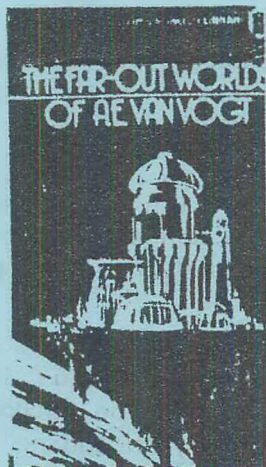


OUTWARD BOUND by Juanita Coulson. Del Rey SF, dist in Aust by Doubleday Aust. P/L. 371 pp. A\$4.95. On sale now.

The sequel to the above. The family has moved out into space - Mars, in fact, leaving two of the clan, Clarissa and her son, Stuart, on Earth. The story focuses on the younger members, this time on Brenna Saunder as she and Morgan McKelvey pool their fortunes to keep Breakthrough Unlimited going, and their dream of FTL flight a reality. When Morgan is incapacitated in an explosion on a test flight of the FTL ship, things begin to get tough...

Again this novel is good, 'hard' sf - of the standard of Arthur C Clarke's 'hard' sf of the 50's, concerning the first manned satellites and the first moon flight. They are also convoluted and heavy on characterization. Solid reading.

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THE FAR-OUT WORLDS OF A E VAN VOGT by A E Van Vogt. New English Library, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. 222 pp, A\$3.50. On sale now.

This is a re-release of the 1975 edition. The stories cover a wide range of Van Vogt's talents, and they include The Replicators, The First Martian, The Purpose, The Earth Killers, The Cataaaaa, Automation, Itself!, No The First, Fulfilment, Ship Of Darkness, and The Ultra Man. I don't know when these were written, but they have the feel of the Golden Age of the 40's and early 50's about them.

If you liked the early Van Vogt (of VOYAGE OF THE SPACE BEAGLE and WAR OF THE RULL) then you will like these. And for those who haven't read much, or any, Van Vogt, they are a good introduction.

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CAGEWORLD 3 - THE TYRANT OF HADES by Colin Kapp. New English Library, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. 173 pp. A\$3.95. On sale now.

When Maq Ancor, Sine Anura, Cherry and their two companions are chased off the Uranus Shell they voyage out to the Neptune Shell, the gigantic artificial shell circling the sun at the orbit of the old planet Neptune. The shells had been created by the artificial intelligence Zeus to keep up with the exploding population of humans. However, with the population doubling every thirty years, the Uranus shell was soon overcrowded and the surplus population shuttled to the Neptune shell. Something was wrong in that Shell, and the traffic was almost at a standstill.

The Shellback's mission (and that of her crew) was to find out exactly what the problem was and attempt to set it right. SF in the tradition of EE (Doc) Smith.

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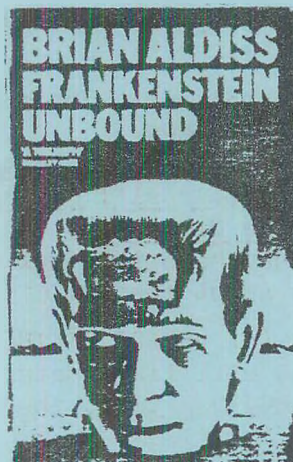


THE MAKESHIFT GOD by Russell Griffin. Granada, dist in Aust by Granada Publishing (Aust) P/L. 272 pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

When an answer is received from space to earlier outwards beamed messages, it set the world of Arthur Caine agitter. From a society that was in the midst of decadence, to a society that had degenerated into its own future he journeyed to find some purpose to his life - beyond the ivory tower he had always lived in, even accepting the offer of a fifteen year-old girl for her version of dominant therapy.

He went seeking the Wandering Jew and found more than he and the rest of the crew had bargained for.

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FRANKENSTEIN UNBOUND by Brian Aldiss. Triad Granada, dist in Aust by Granada Publishing (Aust) P/L. 157 pp. A\$4.95. On sale now.

I have heard a lot about this book before I received it and was looking forward to reading it, though with some trepidation. After all, Aldiss's latest efforts are a little askew of my likes.

This novelisation of an encounter with Frankenstein, his monster and the creator - as of both is a honest attempt to bring 20th Century literary methods (ie sf) into the world of the 19th Century plot

When the central character, thrown adrift from his own time by events beyond his control, finds himself in the world of The monster, he determines to meet the authoress. How he does so, its results and the aftermath, including increasingly large time displacements, make interesting reading.





INTO THE SLAVE NEBULA by John Brunner. Corgi SF, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishers (Aust) P/L. 157 pp. A\$2.95. On sale now.

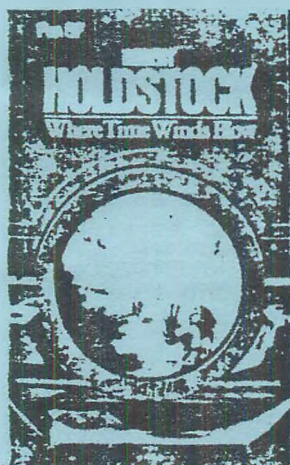
This is a re-issue of one of Brunner's 1968 Lancer Books. I read it in my holidays and found it just the book for relaxing with. I had to fight (..not really fight... just not relaxing) to get through the two above, but found this book a good, light read.

It follows the adventures of Derry Horn, a rich young man, as he backtracks the trail of a man, a Citizen Of The Galaxy, whom he had found murdered, just before going on a week-long binge in the Carnival week on Earth. Just what the connection was between the blue skinned androids and the killers is a nice puzzle, but the obvious parallels....

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WHEN TIME WINDS BLOW by Robert Holdstock. Pan SF, dist in Aust by Pan Books (Aust) P/L. 286 pp. A\$3.95. On sale now.

To quote the blurb: a planet where eerie time displacements, like winds, can dump alien artefacts from the past and future into now, or sweep things away from now into anywhere.

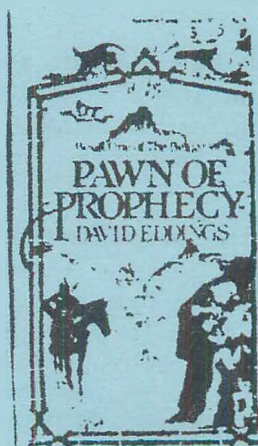
When I started to read this novel and found the concept of time winds, I thought, "Ah, Aldiss and Dickson again." Close, but not quite. Holdstock reveals, when the reader explores the craggy landscape of the time valley, that all is not that it seems and the revealing of the mysteries of the phantom, the aliens which appear, and the nature of the time winds themselves creates one of the most refreshingly new visions of 1982.

\*Recommended\*.

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PAWN OF PROPHECY by David Eddings. Book One of The Belgariad. Ballantine Fantasy, dist in Aust. by Doubleday Aust P/L. 258 pp. A\$4.95. On sale now.

The amount of fantasy which is pouring out these days contains much mush. When I saw this was Book One, I thought, looks like another one of these ghod awful lines. It's not. The standard of writing is high and the plot is, though not out-of-this-world, is at least interesting. The beginning tells of the (now) usual fall of the gods and the leaving of the planet to one of them (usually Evil, but with curbed powers). Then comes the human champion/s and the fight is on.

In this case it is about an immortal wizard and his immortal daughter, who have taken in a boy, a descendant of a line of kings. There is also a 'orb' of power. It's a cut above the majority of S&S.





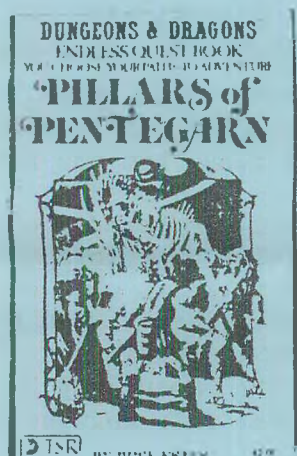
DUNGEON OF DREAD by Rose Estes. TSR, dist in Aust by Doubleday Aust P/L. 128 pp. A\$3.00. On sale now. Illus: J Holloway.

One of a series of 4 Dungeons & Dragons adventure books, in which the reader makes the choices for the character. The right choices lead to a happy ending, a stupid or rash choice may get the character killed etc. In this book there is a troll - the character, a sword-armed fighter, is given a choice between fighting and avoiding it. The character has a side kick, a hobbit who is trying to overcome his timidity. Occasionally the fighter will give the hobbit a mini-sermon on the importance of courage - obviously a hint to the reader/player as to what choices are most in character - the fighter isn't depicted as a rash fool, however. Mainly aimed at the juvenile market. - Diane Fox.

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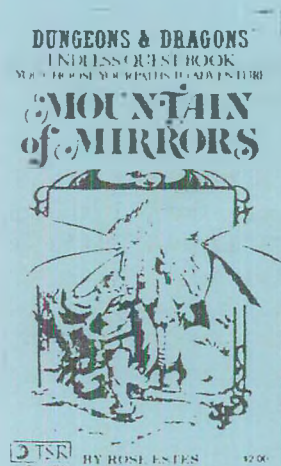
PILLARS OF PENTEGARN by Rose Estes. TSR, dist in Aust by Doubleday Aust P/L. Illus: Harry Muir. 153 pp. A\$3.00. On sale now.

Slightly more sophisticated than the first of the series, although it also involves venturing into a dungeon ruled by an evil sorcerer. The character for identification with is a young lad with the ability to talk to animals. His companions are a wise old wizard, a strong but reckless fighter, and a slightly chaotic neutral female elf thief. The risks of death and disaster are higher, and there are slightly Tolkienish overtones of a "battle between good and evil" which were not so obvious in the first book. There are a fox and owl as secondary characters - mainly to make humorous remarks, but they do become involved at a couple of the decision points. - Diane Fox.

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MOUNTAIN OF MIRRORS by Rose Estes. TSR, dist in Aust by Doubleday Aust P/L. Illus: Jim Holloway. 153 pp. A\$3.00. On sale now.

The character in this book is an elf fighter who is armed with a magic sword. He's investigating a sinister mountain pass, and has to either remove the danger himself, or at least get the information on how to defeat the menace to his village.

There's only one effective way to defeat the menace, and a whole series of sensible choices must be made - the character is much better off if he acts with foresight; no-win situations are marked fairly clearly. There's a chance of acquiring companions, including a teleporting lynx who's got a huge ego - sort of a Garfield type.

A series of correct choices will lead to a spectacular and satisfying destruction of the villains, and a rich reward for the character. - Diane Fox.



DUNGEONS & DRAGONS  
 ENDLESS QUEST BOOK  
 NO. 100 NEW EDITION 1981

# RETURN to BROOKMERE



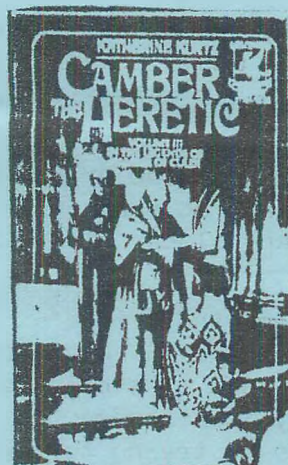
TSR BY ROSE ESTES 128

RETURN TO BROOKMERE by Rose Estes. TSR, dist in Aust by Doubleday Aust P/L. Illus: Tim Truman. 153 pp. A\$3.00. On sale now.

Like the other three this has a handsome cover by Larry Elmore, showing a detailed scene from the story, or rather, one of the versions of the story.

The character this time is an "Elven fighter named Brion", who is given a brief physical description. His armour and equipment are also described (there's an explanation of what chainmail is, which underlines the impression that these books are aimed at children who haven't yet played D&D much). The character is also equipped with a talking amulet, the Mouth of Mimulus. There are encounters with a melancholy pacifistic Gnoll, a giant weasel.... - Diane Fox.

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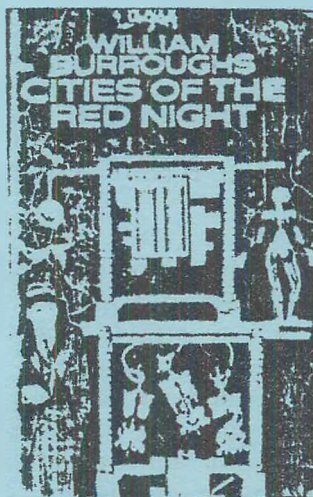


CAMBER THE HERETIC by Katherine Kurtz. Ballantine Fantasy, dist in Aust by Doubleday Aust P/L. 311 pp. A\$4.50. On sale now.

This is volume 3 in The Legends of Camber of Culdi, and follows CAMBER OF CULDI and SAINT CAMBER. It tells of how, now that Cinhil was dying Camber and the Council attempted to put a discovery by Healer Rhys into practice. Whether it could be done and whether it should be done are arguments set out in this hefty volume.

The Camber and Deryni series have quite a voracious following - they keep clamouring for more of Kurtz's output. I am sure they will find this volume to their liking. As with other books that come part of a trilogy, it is best to try to pick up others of the ilk.

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CITIES OF THE RED NIGHT by William Burroughs. Picador, dist in Aust by Pan Books (Aust) P/L. 287 pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

William Burroughs made quite a name for himself in the 60's for his (then) pornographic writings - his latest book is more linearly written than those past exercises, and is somewhat easier to follow. One of his disciples is Jim Ballard. So if you like Ballard at his ~~best~~ best, then you'll probably like Burroughs, though if excrement allied with sex bothers you - stay away.

Based on the idea of a early 18th Century pirate, Captain Mission, who "fought for complete equality; the abolition of slavery, torture and the death penalty; freedom of religion and the end of all tyranny", it features Burroughs old cronies -- Dr. Benway, Audrey Carsons, Clem Snide the Private Asshole, and the Wild Boys, together with some new creations - Skipper Nordenholz, Peterson and the Countesses de Gulpa and de Vile....





A WILLIAM BURROUGHS READER by William Burroughs. Picador, dist in Aust by Pan Books (Aust) p/L. 377 pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

This is a collection of Burroughs' main books, from which extracts have been taken. They include The Naked Lunch, The Soft Machine, The Ticket That Exploded, Nova Express, The Wild Boys, Exterminator!, The Third Mind, Cities Of The Red Night and ends with a selected Bibliography.

As mentioned in the previous review, if you missed the 60's (and early 70's) and you wish to gain an impression of the effluvia, and aren't reluctant to expose yourself to mouldy jock straps and chlorine, then this book is a purchase you could think of, though it'd probably put you off the man for life.

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WARRIOR OF VENGEANCE: SORCERER'S BLOOD by Ross Anton Coe. No.1. Pinnacle Books, dist in Aust by Doubleday (Aust) P/L. 212 pp. A\$4.95. On sale now.

As I said, a lot of fantasy crud has come out recently - this is a good example of it. Part one of a series, it projects into the future (of publishing) so that if I come across this series/author again I know I can miss this with impunity.

The writing is without spark and the cliché's abound. The blurb states: "The Epic Sword And Sorcery Tradition Of The Mighty Conan". Oh, Yeah? It looks like being a long series. In this volume the hero's family is killed by the minions of the evil sorcerer Augage, who is trying to take over the world aided by the power of the Black Moon.

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STARSHIP ORPHEUS No1 by Symon Jade. Pinnacle Books, dist in Aust by Doubleday (Aust) P/L. 181 pp. A\$4.95. On sale now.

Pinnacle publishes the Richard Blade series, as well as one about Nazi Hunters. If I ever had any doubts about the US equivalent of Badger Books, now I don't. This is it. Deadalus is the leader's name.

This mess is badly plotted & written (Jade uses the plural of several interesting words: spacecrafts, being one of them). Dead has an interesting sex life with his girlfriend, which seems to consist mostly of chewing on her nipples.

The heroes of the novel "came aboard the stolen space craft to fight the forces of a futuristic society bent on total takeover. But how long can one starship last against an empire that has the entire galaxy for its killing ground?"

Judging by Blake's 7, quite some time.





THE PROMETHEUS MAN by Ray Faraday Nelson. The Donning Company. Trade paperback, 233 pp. US\$5.95. On sale now at various locations (Galaxy, etc).

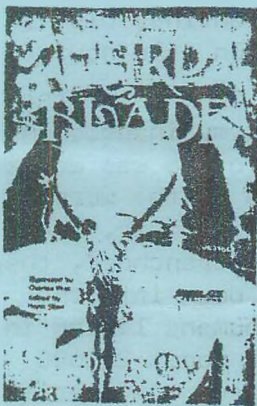
The novel starts out with a quote from the Nrobook of Baboo: If we could share this world below,  
If we could learn to love...  
If we could share this world below,  
We'd need no world above.

This novel is, as was The Makeshift God, set in a world that is disintegrating. Douglas had created a novel balloon, Valhalla, to ride the storm out in the air, as well as the political one on the ground. If he would succeed would depend of many things... \*Recommended\*.

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THE HARP AND THE BLADE by John Meyer Meyers. The Donning Company, trade paperback, 223 pp. US\$5.95. On sale now as above.

This is really a historical novel, and it follows the adventures of Finnian, a wandering minstrel who also carried books of various types to enlighten those who lived off the usual tracks. All was ok until he met us with a Pictish shaman, who put a curse on him. Whether it was a true curse or not, its effects followed him to the end of the book. The curse was not too bad - it was only that he give help to who needed aid. and this was quite a few.

The setting and the characters are very well covered and the attitudes and the ideals are close to that of the period, though some of Finnian's ideas are a little ahead of his time. His offsider is named Conan (no relation).

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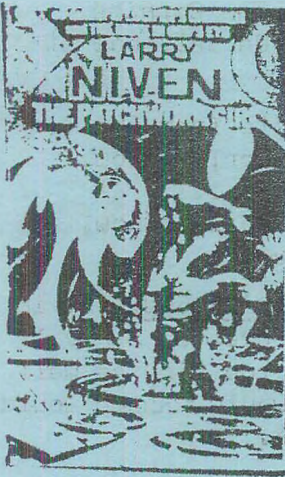
THE GREY MANE OF MORNING by Joy Chant. Bantam books, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishers (Aust) P/L. Illus by Martin White, 332 pp. A\$3.95. On sale now.

This is the prequel to Red Moon and Black Mountain. It is fantasy, but the setting could be purely sf; only the appearance of the Gods in the plot takes it out of that genre.

The book tells of the Khentors, who roam the Plain on their horned horses (said in the novel to be more intelligent than horses, but I didn't notice any real difference) and how they were broken out of their age old tribute to the Golden Ones by circumstances, and the leadership and adventuring spirit of one of their own - Mor'ahh, the son of their 'Lord'. The setting and back ground of the indian-like tribesmen and women is well thought-out and reads well. The illustrations tie in well with the written words and offset it quite remarkedly.

This is a well told fantasy, and although I haven't read the first book, I found it worth reading. This is the kind of book that will appeal well enough to the female of the species, as well as the male.





THE PATCHWORK GIRL by Larry Niven. Futura, dist in Aust by Doubleday Aust P/L. 144 pp. A\$4.95. On sale now.

This is something relatively rare in sf - a good old-fashioned murder mystery set on the moon - a 'locked room' murder mystery at that. All the clues are there for those who like that sort of thing. I found the writing clear and the plot not too confusing. Niven is very good at hard sf and this novel, about Gil the Arm's search for the killer, is up to his standards.

I found it quite engrossing and, though it is only 144 pp, I think it is worth the \$4.96 asked. This ranks with the other detective novels in sf. If you like sf mysteries/detective work then get this. You'll like it.

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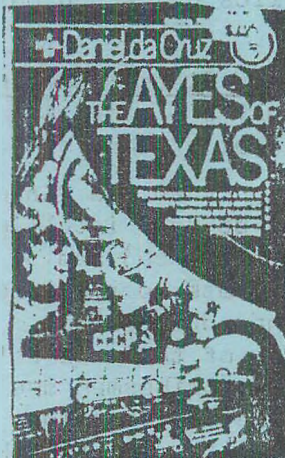
ATTACK FROM ATLANTIS by Lester del Rey. Ballantine, dist in Aust by Doubleday Aust P.L. 167 pp. A\$3.95. On sale now.

This is a good juvenile sf adventure. When I saw the title I was a little put off reading it, but my indecision proved unfounded. The hero is an 18 year old who was working on an experimental submersible when, because of the worsening international situation, the government took it over. When they were testing it over one of the famous "trenches", they were captured by men in "bubbles" and towed down into the depths, in which they found a lost race of humans living in an underwater city. They had been there for about 20,000 years and each passing year their position grew more perilous. Naturally the surface dwellers wished to return to the surface, but the inhabitants of 'Atlantis' didn't want their secret revealed, lest the fear and hate of the surface penetrate their peaceful civilization.

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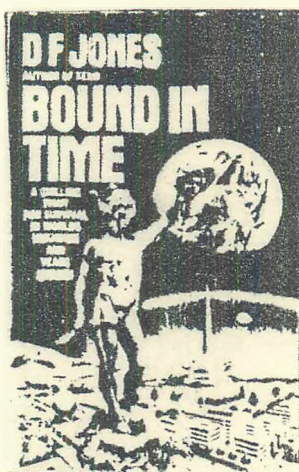
THE AYES OF TEXAS by Daniel da Cruz. Ballantine sf, dist in Aust by Doubleday Aust P/L. 246 pp. A\$3.95. On sale now.

This is a spoof about an attack on a visiting fleet of Soviet warships by the Texan Navy, mostly commanded by a Texas Businessman. It could be that the spectacle of Big Business attacking the nasty communists turns Texans on.

It is basically about the rise to power of a one-time sailor who got his in the last days of WWII and, with three artificial limbs, climbs to power and money by using his brain. When the Soviets have taken over most of the world, it is up to the Texans and Gwilliam Forte (?) to show the rest of the US what evil plans the Soviets actually had by attacking the visiting fleet and blowing it up (without warning, of course). So the US actually fires the first shots.

Recommended if you are a Texan.





BOUND IN TIME by D F Jones. Granada, dist by Granada Pub. (Aust) P/L. 283 pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

This time travel story is up there with the best (including Wells').

Mark Elverson was chosen to be the first Traveller in time because he was a doctor and he had an inoperable heart condition, which would kill him in twelve months. The travel was one way (into the future). What Mark found when he arrived 480 years in his future stunned him - the earth, the space station and the moon base. Eventually he made his way back to earth, leaving his mark on both space habitats, but mainly that of the moon base.

I do not think the ending quite in line with the rest of the book - it had a point, though. \*Recommended\*.

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#### JANUARY RELEASES:

- GRANADA - WORLD ENOUGH, AND TIME by James Kahn.\*
- PAN - FIREFLOOD AND OTHER STORIES by Vonda McIntyre\*
- TRANSWORLD- LENS MAN FROM RIGEL by David Kyle.\*
- NELSON - DYING OF PARADISE by Stephen Couper.\*  
THE ILLUSTRATED BOOK OF SCIENCE FICTION LISTS  
/Mike Ashley.\*
- HODDER - A SENSE OF WONDER by Wyndham, Leinster, Williamson.\*  
FRIDAY by Robert Heinlein.\*  
PROJECT POPE by Clifford Simak.

#### FEBRUARY RELEASES:

- DOUBLEDAY - CYBORG AND THE SORCERORS by Evans.  
ROCKET JOCKY by del Rey.  
STEN by Allan Cole and Chris Bunch.\*  
THE THRALL & THE DRAGON'S HEART by Eliz. Boyer.\*
- TRANSWORLD- THE KALEVIDE by Lou Goble.\*  
DEATHHUNTER by Ian Watson.
- PENGUIN - YESTERDAY'S MEN by George Turner.\*

#### MARCH RELEASES:

- HODDER - THE FIFTH HEAD OF CERBERUS by Gene Wolf.  
THE EXPERIMENT by Richard Setlowe.  
THE DARK CRYSTAL by A Smith.

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It's sad, but there is still nothing actually published in Australia which has been sent for review. The closest is the novel by George Turner, which is printed in Hong Kong.

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